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Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 69/5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventieth session.

The present report reproduces the replies of Governments and bodies of the United Nations system to the request of the Secretary-General for information on the matter.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 69/5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventieth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, in a note verbale dated 1 April 2015, the Secretary-General invited Governments and organs and agencies of the United Nations system to provide any information they might wish to contribute to the preparation of the report. A further note verbale was sent on 1 June 2015.

3. The present report reproduces the replies from Governments and organs and agencies of the United Nations system that had been received as at 7 July 2015. Replies received after that date will be reproduced as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Afghanistan

[Original: English]
[14 May 2015]

The Government of Afghanistan has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 69/5, in conformity with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

In that regard, the Government of Afghanistan has always voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Afghanistan considers that differences and problems between States should be settled through dialogue and negotiations.

Albania

[Original: English]
[4 June 2015]

The Republic of Albania, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and by international law, fully implements resolution 69/5 and does not have or apply any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble of the resolution.

Algeria

[Original: French]
[2 June 2015]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba is contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It hinders the economic and social development of that country and the legitimate aspirations of the Cuban people.

Algeria calls for this unilateral measure to be lifted and reiterates, like other States Members of the United Nations, the right of Cuba to cooperate with all its international partners without restrictions, in compliance with the rules of international trade and the financial regulations in force.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, at the seventeenth Ministerial Conference of its member States, held in Algiers in May 2014, reiterated its call for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba which, in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the Charter, international law and the principle of neighbourliness, causes huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba.

Algeria, which welcomed the restoration of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America, hopes that this highly positive development will lead to the immediate and unconditional lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba.

Andorra

[Original: English]
[10 April 2015]

The Principality of Andorra has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 69/5. In that regard, the Government of the Principality of Andorra has always voted in favour of the above-mentioned resolution and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Angola

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

The Republic of Angola notes that the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States is an initial step towards the normalization of bilateral relations. In that context, Angola welcomes President Obama's explicit intention to begin a new chapter in the ties between both nations and to re-establish diplomatic relations.

Nevertheless, a key element in the United States policy against Cuba is still to be resolved: the economic, commercial and financial blockade that remains unresolved. The measures that entered into force on 16 January 2015 solely modify some elements of the blockade in a limited manner. There remains a long way to go in order to dismantle critical aspects that uphold and shape such policy.

The Republic of Angola reaffirms its commitment to preserving and promoting the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international laws as they constitute the essence of multilateralism and a collective effort to maintain peace and international security, economic growth and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In this context, the Republic of Angola reiterates its concern over the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba and expresses its desire to see the current negotiations under way evolve towards a final resolution that will allow the Cuban people to exercise their right to freely decide their own political and economic system.

The Republic of Angola once again expresses its recognition of the efforts of the Secretary-General towards ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed against Cuba.

The Republic of Angola reiterates its unconditional support for the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of General Assembly resolution 69/5 and takes this opportunity to appeal once again to the international community to redouble its efforts to promote constructive and transparent dialogue between the two countries, with a view to achieving the objectives of all the resolutions already adopted by the United Nations on the matter.

Antigua and Barbuda

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda expresses its concern at the continued promulgation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, despite the overwhelming support by Member States for resolution 69/5, previous resolutions against the embargo and other relevant international treaties.

Further, in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 69/5, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda continues to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the aforementioned resolution, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirms the freedom of trade and navigation.

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[15 May 2015]

The Government of the Argentine Republic has fully implemented the provisions of resolution 69/5, adopted on 28 October 2014, and previous General Assembly resolutions concerning the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Act No. 24.871, enacted on 5 September 1997, established the legislative framework governing the scope of application of foreign legislation within Argentina. Article 1 of that Act provides that foreign legislation which, by imposing an economic embargo that restricts investment in a given country, purports to have extraterritorial legal effects in order to bring about a change of government in a country or to affect its right to self-determination shall be absolutely inapplicable and devoid of legal effects. The United States embargo against Cuba is regulated by federal legislation, in particular the Torricelli Act (Cuban Democracy Act) of October 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act) of March 1996.

In addition, our country is fully committed to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and multilateralism. Within that framework, since 1995, Argentina has supported the General Assembly resolutions concerning the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. It has also voiced opposition to the embargo at every available opportunity, both in regional forums and in other international organizations.

In line with that position, since the adoption of resolution 69/5, Argentina has supported the following declarations in multilateral forums:

A. Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)

A.1. Special declaration of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States on the need to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba (Third Summit of CELAC, Costa Rica, 28 and 29 January 2015)

A.2. Political declaration of Belén (Third Summit of CELAC, Costa Rica, 28 and 29 January 2015)

Paragraph 72. Welcome the historic decision of the Presidents of Cuba and the United States to re-establish diplomatic relations. Reiterate our strongest rejection of the implementation of unilateral coercive measures and once again reiterate our solidarity with the Republic of Cuba, while reaffirming our call upon the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on this sisterly nation for more than five decades. Urge the President of the United States that, in this way, use their broad executive powers to substantially modify the blockade.

B. Ibero-American Summit

Special communiqué on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, including the implementation of the Helms-Burton Act (submitted by Cuba and adopted at the twenty-fourth Ibero-American Summit, Veracruz, Mexico, 8 and 9 December 2014).

Armenia

[Original: English]
[2 June 2015]

Armenia's national legislation does not promulgate or apply any laws or regulations, referred to in General Assembly resolution 69/5, which can have a devastating influence on the economic and social development of Cuba.

The Government of the Republic of Armenia has on a number of occasions expressed its opposition to the policy of economic blockades and closed borders, being itself a subject of the continuing blockade by Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Australia

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

The Government of Australia reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 69/5. Since 1996, the Government of Australia has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo on Cuba. Australia has no sanctions or measures against Cuba that restrict trade or investment. Australia is encouraged by the ongoing steps to normalize relations between Cuba and the United States.

Azerbaijan

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

The Republic of Azerbaijan firmly upholds the norms and principles of international law in its foreign policy.

The Republic of Azerbaijan enjoys friendly diplomatic, economic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba. Azerbaijan has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, trade or financial relations between Azerbaijan and Cuba. Azerbaijan will continue to undertake appropriate measures to strengthen cooperation and develop friendly relations with Cuba.

Bahamas

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

The Commonwealth of the Bahamas enjoys normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

The Bahamas has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between the Bahamas and the Republic of Cuba.

In that context, the Bahamas recalls and affirms the position of regional and interregional bodies such as the Caribbean Community, the African, Caribbean and Pacific States, and the Non-Alignment Movement.

The Bahamas also lauds the recent rapprochement between the Government of the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba and welcomes the efforts of the Executive Branch of the United States Government towards having the Legislative Branch of that Government repeal the legislation enforcing the embargo.

Bahrain

[Original: Arabic]
[29 May 2015]

The Kingdom of Bahrain voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 69/5, adopted on 28 October 2014, in accordance with its firm belief in the importance of promoting friendly relations between States, mutual trust, respect of sovereignty and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Kingdom of Bahrain and Cuba have signed memorandums of understanding in favour of strengthening and extending relations in various fields. One example is a memorandum of understanding for health services, signed on 25 August 2014, to increase the cooperation between the two countries.

The Kingdom of Bahrain supported resolution 69/5 in its entirety, in a principled position that stems from its conviction that the Security Council is the international body responsible for taking decisions regarding the imposition of limited measures according to the Charter concerning the maintenance of international peace and security.

Bangladesh

[Original: English]
[6 May 2015]

The Government of Bangladesh has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 69/5. Bangladesh has consistently supported previous resolutions on this item in the Assembly and also voted in its favour of the aforementioned resolution.

Barbados

[Original: English]
[22 May 2015]

Barbados has consistently voted in favour of the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba since it was first introduced in the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, in 1991.

Barbados reiterates its support for resolution 69/5, which was adopted on 28 October 2014 and is the most recent on this issue, and reaffirms its commitment to full implementation at the national level since Barbados has no laws that in any way restrict freedom of trade and navigation with Cuba.

Barbados also welcomes the recent positive developments in the relationship between the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America, specifically the agreement to re-establish diplomatic relations and the commencement of bilateral discussions on the lifting of the embargo.

Belarus

[Original: Russian]
[20 May 2015]

The Republic of Belarus has consistently condemned the use of unilateral economic measures to exert political and economic pressure on developing countries as it considers such measures to be contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and other international legal instruments.

The unilateral embargo against the Republic of Cuba and the imposition by the United States of America of unilateral coercive measures against other countries have not only held back the development of the Cuban economy but have also impaired the rights and legitimate interests of Cuban citizens and have thereby created an unacceptable obstacle to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The Republic of Belarus supports the inalienable right of all States to define their own development models. Any unilateral attempts by certain States to change the domestic political systems of other States, using military, political, economic or other forms of pressure, is unacceptable.

The Republic of Belarus calls for a rapid end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo by the United States against the Republic of Cuba. The full lifting of sanctions could provide a basis for the further normalization of relations between the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba. In that connection, the Republic of Belarus notes that the decision adopted by the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba in December 2014 to begin talks on re-establishing diplomatic relations is a positive step in that direction.

The Republic of Belarus expresses the hope that the dialogue launched by the Presidents of the two countries at the Summit of the Americas in April 2015 will promote further respectful and constructive dialogue that will lead to an end of the economic, commercial and financial embargo by United States against Cuba.

Belize

[Original: English]
[23 April 2015]

Belize reaffirms its absolute commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including, in particular, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation, which also form fundamental principles of international law. In strict observance of the Charter and international law, Belize has consistently supported the resolutions denouncing the embargo against Cuba. Belize rejects the extraterritorial application of laws and

measures. The ongoing attempt to isolate Cuba in disregard of the annually adopted resolutions that enjoy the overwhelming support of Member States of the United Nations is a flagrant affront to multilateralism and the political will of the international community.

Belize and Cuba maintain a constructive and mutually beneficial partnership that has yielded concrete benefits for all our peoples. Our policy of engagement is further enhanced through regional cooperation between the Caribbean community and Cuba.

Benin

[Original: French]
[12 May 2015]

The adoption by the United Nations General Assembly on 28 October 2014 of resolution 69/5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", was a source of satisfaction for Benin, a democratic, peace-loving country that values equality and justice and respects human rights.

With that resolution, the General Assembly further reinforced the faith of the Government and people of Benin in the virtues of dialogue as the only method of settling disputes and restoring trust between States.

Benin fully supports the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and considers that the challenges of modern times require States to work together in a spirit of solidarity for the good of their peoples.

For this reason, the Government of the Republic of Benin, which has never adopted legislation restricting free trade with any State, has always called for the unilateral measures imposed against Cuba to be lifted promptly, in order to allow that country to develop and participate fully in international exchanges.

In this regard, Benin welcomes the policy of openness, détente and rekindled relations adopted by the United States towards Cuba. It hopes that this policy will very quickly result in a full lifting of the embargo against Cuba, in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution, so as to bring to a definitive end the suffering that the embargo has caused to the Cuban people. Benin strongly urges the Governments of Cuba and the United States to expedite their efforts with a view to achieving this goal in the very near future.

Bolivia (Plurinational State of)

[Original: Spanish]
[12 May 2015]

The Bolivian Government rejects any action or unilateral measure taken by the United States against Cuba for the purpose of imposing an economic, commercial and financial embargo against any other State, as well as the use of unilateral measures of coercion, discredit and disinformation against another country.

Bolivia condemns in the strongest terms the policies of economic, commercial and financial embargo the Government of the United States has imposed on the

Cuban people, policies that have affected them and prevented them from exercising their right to development for over half a century.

The human cost of the embargo is incalculable. It has caused suffering and constitutes a huge, flagrant and systematic human rights violation. It amounts to an act of genocide under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as well as an act of economic war under the Declaration concerning the Laws of Naval War adopted at the 1909 Naval Conference of London.

The United States embargo against Cuba is not a bilateral matter. The embargo is aggressively extraterritorial; it is a violation of international law that affects the sovereignty of all States. It contravenes the norms of international trade and free navigation. Moreover, the inclusion of medicine and food in the embargo violates international humanitarian law.

The Bolivian State believes that the United States embargo against Cuba violates the purposes, principles and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the Inter-American Democratic Charter, as well as the foundations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. It affects the Cuban people and all countries and peoples of the world.

The disregard of General Assembly resolutions reflecting the international community's near-unanimous rejection of the unilateral embargo by the United States Government demonstrates that there are countries which have benefited greatly from the establishment of the Organization but fail to respect those decisions that do not suit them.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia has adopted a new type of cooperation and complementarity based on the principles of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America — Peoples' Trade Agreement, of which the Republic of Cuba is also a member.

In this context, bilateral relations between Bolivia and Cuba are guided by a spirit of unity and justice for the benefit of their people with a view to increasing the two countries' participation in the international economy and strengthening their cooperation and trade. The First Additional Protocol to Economic Complementarity Agreement No. 47, signed on 4 February 2009, is therefore being fully implemented, reaffirming the desire to create closer ties between their Governments and peoples; it includes market access facilities and complete trade liberalization, thereby promoting fair trade for our peoples.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia acknowledges and appreciates the efforts made by Cuba to cooperate with the Bolivian people despite the significant harm to its economy caused by the embargo. Cuba provides support in various fields, primarily education and health.

In the various international forums of which it is a member, the Plurinational State of Bolivia has unconditionally supported resolutions and declarations expressing the rejection of the embargo against Cuba. At the Seventh Summit of the Americas, held in Panama on 10 and 11 April 2015, President Evo Morales reaffirmed his support for Cuba and asserted that, in addition to lifting the unjust embargo, the United States should compensate Cuba for all of the harm it has caused Cuba over the past 50 years.

Given this situation, Bolivia joins in solidarity with and fully endorses the self-determination of the Cuban people and the fulfilment of their sovereign right to live free of the unjust, illegal and inhumane embargo by the Government of the United States.

Bolivia will continue to express its consistent support by voting in favour of the resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" at the next session of the General Assembly.

In view of the foregoing, the Plurinational State of Bolivia firmly states that the United States embargo against the Republic of Cuba must be ended unconditionally, unilaterally and immediately.

On paragraph 3:

The Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia has not adopted any laws or measures that are contrary to the spirit of General Assembly resolution 69/5 and regrets that other States have resorted to this illegal, harmful and inhumane practice in violation of international law.

On paragraph 4:

The Plurinational State of Bolivia requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to continue to keep Member States and the relevant bodies informed regarding the negative impact on the Republic of Cuba of the policies and practices imposed by the Government of the United States under its economic, commercial and financial embargo against that sovereign country, measures which also affect the sovereignty of other Member States.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

[Original: English]
[2 July 2015]

Bosnia and Herzegovina guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and by international law has supported resolution 69/5 and has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 69/5 and is ready to develop cooperation with Cuba at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Botswana

[Original: English]
[11 May 2015]

The Republic of Botswana has never, and does not intend, to promulgate, apply and enforce any laws and measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 69/5. As reflected by its vote on the resolution, Botswana is opposed to the continued adoption and application of such extraterritorial measures, and in this regard supports the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Brazil

[Original: English]
[9 June 2015]

Brazil reiterates its firm opposition to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba as well as to the extraterritorial application of domestic trade laws and the adoption of discriminatory trade practices.

In accordance with resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54/21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7, 59/11, 60/12, 61/11, 62/3, 63/7, 64/6, 65/6, 66/6, 67/4, 68/8 and 69/5, Brazil has not promulgated or applied any laws, regulations or measures with extraterritorial effects which could affect the sovereignty of other States and the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction, as well as the freedom of trade and navigation. Brazil's legal system does not recognize the validity of the application of measures with extraterritorial effects.

Furthermore, Governments not complying with resolution 69/5 should urgently take further steps to eliminate discriminatory trade practices and bring to an end unilaterally declared economic, commercial and financial embargoes.

The Brazilian Government is committed to diplomacy, to the peaceful settlement of disputes, to economic and trade cooperation and to the prevalence of the principles and purposes enshrined in the United Nations Charter, as well as to the respect for international law.

The Brazilian Government not only opposes the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba but has also developed a growing economic relationship with the country. That relationship is based on the belief that the proper way to support Cuba is through its integration into economic international flows. The Brazilian Government thus reiterates its firm commitment to continue to follow up on bilateral projects in the areas of investments, trade and the granting of official financing.

In accordance with resolution 69/5, Brazil considers that there is an urgent need to put an end to the adoption and implementation of unilateral measures. In addition to the adverse impacts they impose on the population of the country under sanctions, the extraterritorial nature of those measures is in clear contradiction with the basic principles of international law as well as the solid coexistence between peoples, which implies respect for sovereignty and for the freedom of trade and navigation.

Sanctions and embargoes harm the populations of countries involved, especially the poorest, who suffer the impact of those unilateral measures through economic uncertainty and unemployment. Financial institutions throughout the world have been penalized with fines for providing services to companies dealing with Cuban clients, which is detrimental to the economic growth prospects of the country and to social opportunities for Cuban citizens. Such measures have shown scant effect in achieving the results that would have justified their creation.

Sanctions and other unilateral measures have also affected the regular exercise of diplomatic activities of Cuba in the United States, as well as those diplomatic activities of many foreign embassies in Cuba, due to unreasonable constraints imposed on financial institutions with headquarters or branches in the United States. The issue has been recently addressed by the Group of 77 and China in its draft resolution entitled "Enhancement of the administration and financial functioning of

the United Nations". Under the host country agreement signed with the United Nations, the United States committed itself to respect the principle of isonomy, which secures equal distribution of rights and privileges in its dealings with diplomatic missions. Recent regulations imposed on local American banks, however, have failed to respect that principle.

On the occasion of the Third Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) held in Belén, Costa Rica, on 29 January 2015, the Heads of State and Government adopted a political declaration welcoming the historic decision of the Presidents of Cuba and the United States to re-establish diplomatic relations. Members of CELAC have reiterated their solidarity with the Republic of Cuba, while reaffirming their call upon the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on their sisterly nation for more than five decades.

Brazil and CELAC have also urged the President of the United States to make use of broad executive powers to substantially modify the blockade. In this regard, Brazil considers it a positive step that the United States State Department decided to remove the Republic of Cuba from the unilateral list of States allegedly promoting international terrorism and calls upon the United States Government to end the blockade.

In view of the qualified majority of votes in the General Assembly in favour of resolution 69/5, the solid support of the international community for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba is unquestionable, all the more so because of the illegal character of the embargo in relation to the principles of international law and the rules of the multilateral trading system. Intensifying economic relations with Cuba without any conditionality is the correct path that should be followed by all countries interested in supporting the development of the island and the improvement of the condition of life of millions of Cuban citizens.

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

Brunei Darussalam reaffirms its support for all General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo on Cuba. Brunei Darussalam is generally against the unilateral use of sanctions on Member States as it affects their economic and social development. Brunei Darussalam takes the view that such sanctions are contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations. On that basis, Brunei Darussalam has not introduced or applied any laws or measures inconsistent with General Assembly resolution 69/5.

Burkina Faso

[Original: French]
[10 June 2015]

The embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba has had disastrous consequences for the Cuban people and the country's economy.

This embargo runs counter to the fundamental norms of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States and can in no way serve as an appropriate means of settling disputes.

These unilateral measures are also contrary to the guidelines of the World Trade Organization and violate the principle of State sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

For those reasons, Burkina Faso, a peace- and justice-loving country that fully subscribes to the principle of the sovereign equality of States, as called for in the Charter of the United Nations, opposes the continuation of this embargo.

Burkina Faso, which believes in the virtue of exchanges between States, calls for the lifting of the embargo imposed on Cuba and urges the parties concerned to turn to dialogue as a means of peacefully settling their dispute, in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter. It also welcomes the diplomatic rapprochement taking place in 2015 between the two States.

In accordance with its obligations under the Charter and international law, Burkina Faso has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 69/5 of 28 October 2014.

Burundi

[Original: French]
[10 June 2015]

The position of the Government of Burundi has always been to oppose this embargo, which is inconsistent with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States.

Cabo Verde

[Original: English]
[8 May 2015]

The Republic of Cabo Verde, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the National Constitution and in conformity with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which promotes solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among countries and nations, has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 69/5. Cabo Verde has always voted in favour of lifting the embargo and maintains excellent relations of friendship and cooperation with Cuba.

Cambodia

[Original: English]
[29 April 2015]

The Royal Government of Cambodia fully supports the lifting of sanctions imposed by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba. The continued enforcement of this illegal embargo constitutes a violation of international law and of the sovereignty of Cuba.

In the light of the ongoing negotiations between the two countries there should be no more unjustified embargo against Cuba.

In this connection, the Royal Government of Cambodia wishes to call for full compliance by all States Members of the United Nations with the resolution.

Cameroon

[Original: French]
[6 June 2015]

Cameroon is deeply committed to respecting the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of trade, which are enshrined in many international legal instruments.

Pursuant to the provisions of resolution 69/5 and of previous resolutions on the subject, and in accordance with the above-mentioned principles, Cameroon has never adopted legislative or other measures intended to strengthen or expand the embargo against Cuba.

Cameroon, which has always voted in favour of lifting the embargo, maintains excellent relations of friendship and cooperation with Cuba.

Central African Republic

[Original: French]
[20 May 2015]

The Central African Republic, true to its commitments and respectful of international law, and in accordance with its fundamental legislation, which requires the Republic to promote good-neighbourly relations with other States, believes that peaceful coexistence is the foundation of international relations, underlying all other types of interaction.

Accordingly, it considers that the embargo against Cuba, which has lasted for more than 50 years, is contrary to the rules of international law and international humanitarian law. This embargo must be lifted to allow free circulation of persons and goods in the subregion.

The Government of the Central African Republic will thus continue to stand behind the Cuban people until the embargo has been completely lifted.

Chad

[Original: French]
[2 June 2015]

The Republic of Chad calls for an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo which the United States of America has imposed against Cuba for several decades in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

It regrets the negative impacts that the embargo has had on the economic and social development of Cuba, bearing in mind the ongoing crisis in the world economy.

The General Assembly resolution on the embargo sends a strong signal reaffirming the international community's support for that country, which must enjoy the same rights and freedom of trade as all the other States Members of the United Nations.

The Republic of Chad rejects any unilateral action taken against a sovereign country for the purpose of preventing it from enjoying its diplomatic, economic and trading rights. It supports the strengthening of relations of cooperation and friendship among all the States Members of the United Nations, for the sake of international peace and security.

In view of the socioeconomic harm that this embargo has inflicted on Cuban society, the Republic of Chad encourages the international community to redouble its efforts to promote a constructive dialogue between the two countries in order to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo.

Chile

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

The Republic of Chile welcomes the recent announcement of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba and expresses its hope that this historic step may signal the end of any unilateral measure affecting the economic, commercial and financial ties with Cuba in accordance with resolution 69/5. The Republic of Chile reiterates that the embargo on Cuba entails a violation of international law and principles, particularly those on the equality of States, non-interference in internal matters and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Moreover, Chile would like to inform that it has not approved any measures aimed at restraining the normal trade and economic relations between Chile and Cuba. Chile supports the full and free exercise of the right to trade and to establish business relations in the international arena, with no restrictions other than those activities qualified as illegal by Chilean law and the restrictions imposed by the international community according to the Charter of the United Nations.

China

[Original: Chinese]
[20 May 2015]

For 23 consecutive years, the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority of votes, resolutions on the need to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. In them, the Assembly urges all countries to abide by the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law and to repeal or invalidate any laws or measures that are of an extraterritorial nature, that infringe upon the sovereignty of another State or the legitimate rights and interests of the entities and individuals under the jurisdiction of that State and that have an adverse impact on the freedom of trade and navigation.

It is regrettable that these resolutions have not been effectively implemented over the years and that the American economic, trade and financial embargo against Cuba remains in effect. This has not only violated the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant General Assembly resolutions but has also inflicted enormous economic and financial losses on Cuba, impeding the efforts of the Cuban people to eliminate poverty, promote economic and social development and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

It has impaired the right of the Cuban people to existence and development, and adversely affected economic, commercial and financial interactions between Cuba and other countries. At present, with the slowing world economic recovery, persistent risks in financial markets and the challenges of food and energy security and climate change facing the international community, the embargo and sanctions on Cuba are less rational than ever before.

The Chinese Government has always advocated that countries should develop mutual relations on the basis of the purposes and principles of the Charter while respecting the right of other countries to independently choose their own social system and development path. China is opposed to any unilateral sanctions against other countries by military, political, economic or other means.

Meanwhile, China has strictly followed and implemented the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. China and Cuba currently maintain normal economic, trade and personnel exchanges, and friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields continues to grow. This accords with the wishes of our two peoples and is in the interest of Cuba's economic and social development.

Against the current backdrop of a multipolar world, economic globalization, cultural diversity and the democratization of international relations, the pursuit of equal exchange and cooperation among countries is becoming an irresistible trend. The best way to settle differences in the face of disputes is through dialogue on an equal footing and friendly consultation.

China notes that since the United States and Cuba began the process of the normalization of ties, the two sides have taken a number of measures and held multiple rounds of negotiations, thereby achieving positive progress.

China welcomes and supports the efforts of the United States and Cuba to advance the normalization of their relations, while hoping that the United States, acting in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the relevant Assembly resolutions, will comprehensively abolish its embargo and sanctions against Cuba as soon as possible. This is in the interest of both the United States and Cuba, and will benefit the stability and development of the entire region of the Americas.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[8 May 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Colombia, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, reiterates that it has neither enacted nor applied any unilateral laws or measures against Cuba or any other Member State, in keeping with its policy of respect for international law and

commitment to the principles of political independence, self-determination of peoples and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations.

Consequently, Colombia promotes the independent development of the internal policies of every nation and believes that any measure that undermines economic and commercial development and the well-being of the population should cease.

Colombia believes that Member States must make progress in building cooperative and friendly relations on the basis of multilateralism and respect for the principle of sovereign equality and other provisions enshrined in Chapter I of the Charter of the United Nations.

Comoros

[Original: English]
[23 June 2015]

The Government of the Union of the Comoros takes into account the recent reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America and has the honour to inform that it reaffirms its obligation under the Charter of the United Nations and thus has not promulgated or applied any laws or regulations with extraterritorial effects that affect the sovereignty of other States.

The Government of the Comoros supports the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Congo

[Original: French]
[22 May 2015]

The Republic of the Congo reiterates its condemnation of the unilateral and coercive measures imposed by the United States on the Republic of Cuba. It considers the prolonged embargo to be a flagrant violation of Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of public international law and the right of all peoples to freely decide their own political systems and social and economic path without any external constraints.

The Republic of the Congo therefore calls for the unconditional lifting of the embargo, which would help to consolidate and strengthen dialogue, bilateral cooperation, friendship and mutual understanding between the Cuban and American peoples.

The Government of the Republic of the Congo welcomes the recent developments marked by the beginning of a rapprochement between the two countries aimed at dissipating the misunderstanding that has pitted them against one another for more than 50 years.

The Government of the Republic of the Congo strongly encourages both parties to continue the talks already initiated with a view to developing a strong partnership between the two countries to foster peaceful relations based on respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Costa Rica

[Original: Spanish]
[1 June 2015]

Costa Rica, committed to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, supported General Assembly resolution 69/5 and previous versions of that resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed, in particular through the Helms-Burton Act, against Cuba. Costa Rica deems this embargo to be a real obstacle to international trade.

This position has been part of the foreign policy of Costa Rica, which advocates eliminating the unilateral and extraterritorial application of national measures by a State through the imposition of its own laws and legal system on third countries.

Costa Rica is firmly convinced that differences between countries must be addressed only through dialogue and multilateral mechanisms, and it reiterates its total rejection of unilateral measures applied by any State against another. Costa Rica has reiterated on various occasions that any political, economic or military sanctions imposed on States should result from the decisions or recommendations of the Security Council or the General Assembly alone.

At the national level, Costa Rica has not taken any action under resolution 69/5, as there is no action to be implemented on its part. At the international level, however, it has repeatedly stressed the need to lift the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba because it believes that, after so many decades, it is the people of Cuba who have suffered the most.

Costa Rica has defended the right of peoples to self-determination and deplores any measure that negatively affects the civilian population. Nevertheless, it recognizes the need for the Cuban authorities to make progress towards compliance with democratic standards and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In keeping with its policy of respect for international law and commitment to the principles of political independence, self-determination of peoples and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations, Costa Rica reiterates its support for the international community's repeated calls for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

At the Third Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Belén, Costa Rica, on 28 and 29 January 2015, the member States issued a special declaration on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, in which they reiterated their strongest opposition to coercive economic measures not supported by international law, including unilateral measures imposed against sovereign countries for political reasons. These measures impair the well-being of their peoples and are designed to prevent these countries from exercising their right to determine, of their own free will, their political, economic and social systems.

Costa Rica applauds the historic decision by the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America to re-establish diplomatic relations as a step towards normalization of bilateral relations, as communicated on 17 December 2015. In that connection, the Government and people of Costa Rica welcome the announcement

by the high-level authorities of these two friendly nations of their plans to engage in political dialogue and open up various areas that are mutually beneficial and will have a positive impact on the well-being of the Cuban people.

Côte d'Ivoire

[Original: French]
[28 May 2015]

In accordance with its commitment to peace, inclusiveness and the peaceful settlement of disputes, the Ivorian Government has voted in favour of all of the previous resolutions on the issue of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States of America.

In the light of recent developments, Côte d'Ivoire encourages constructive dialogue among all stakeholders and reaffirms its readiness to work with the entire international community to find appropriate solutions with full respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the efforts made by the Secretary-General and reaffirms its support for the full lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo, which would enable Cuba to ensure its own development and thereby help build a peaceful, secure and prosperous world.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[7 July 2015]

Introduction

On 17 December 2014 a new chapter was opened in the relations between Cuba and the United States of America, highlighted by the return of three Cuban antiterrorist fighters who have been unjustly imprisoned in the USA, the announcement of the decision to restore diplomatic relations between the two countries, and recognition by President Barack Obama that his country's policy toward Cuba, including the embargo, was obsolete and should be eliminated. In his State of the Union speech on 20 January 2015, the President urged Congress to "begin the work of ending the embargo".

As part of the changes in United States policy toward Cuba, President Obama announced a number of measures intended to modify application of some aspects of the embargo. On 16 January 2015 amendments to the regulations of the Departments of the Treasury and of Commerce came into effect. Yet while they constitute a step in the right direction they remain limited and insufficient given the magnitude and the scope of the impacts that the embargo laws entail for Cuba and the rest of the world — laws that remain in effect and are strictly enforced.

This report contains a condensed summary of the damage resulting from enforcement of the embargo policy from April 2014 until April 2015, during which time, despite the announcements of 17 December, it was obvious that the unfair and cruel embargo policy was still very much in place.

On 5 September 2014, three months before December's historic announcement, President Obama, citing foreign-policy interests, renewed the sanctions against Cuba under the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917, a fundamental component of the laws and regulations that comprise the embargo against Cuba.

Despite the new scenario, the period under review saw an intensification of the embargo in its financial and extraterritorial dimensions, as evident in the imposition of fines in the millions of dollars against banks and financial institutions, flowing from the persecution of international financial transactions with Cuba. The exclusion of Cuba on 29 May 2015 from the spurious list of state sponsors of international terrorism, on which it should never have appeared, has no effect on the remaining laws and regulations that comprise the embargo, and the financial blockade of Cuba continues.

Cuba is still unable to export and import goods and services freely to or from the United States, and it cannot use the United States dollar in its international financial transactions or hold accounts in that currency with third-country banks. It is also denied access to loans from banks in the United States, their third-country subsidiaries and international institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Consequently, of Cuba is still being seriously obstructed in the normal development of all spheres of economic, social and cultural life.

Many of the limitations imposed by the embargo against Cuba could disappear if the President of the United States were to make determined use of the broad executive powers he holds, even if the full dismantling of that policy requires a decision by Congress.

This report exposes the limited scope of the measures recently taken by the United States executive, and the broad spectrum of actions that could be pursued for eliminating the embargo. It also presents a number of examples of the economic and social damage caused by the embargo in the period under review.

In this connection, it should be noted that the economic damage inflicted on the Cuban people through application of the United States economic, commercial and financial embargo, taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, amounts to US$ 833,755,000,000, despite the decline in the value of gold compared to the previous period. At current prices, over all these years, the embargo has inflicted damages worth more than US$ 121,192,000,000.

The United States Government has at last decided to discuss matters, even though for years the Cuban Government has expressed its readiness for dialogue on the basis of mutual respect, observance of the principles of international law and of the United Nations Charter, and the respectful discussion of the differences existing between the two countries. In this new context, it is essential to ensure respect for the 23 resolutions adopted by the overwhelming majority of the international community in the United Nations General Assembly, calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. The Cuba embargo should never have existed, and it must now cease once and for all.

I. Continuity of the embargo policy

1.1. The embargo laws remain in force

Despite the measures announced by President Barack Obama on 17 December 2014 and his stated willingness to engage in a debate with Congress to lift the embargo, the laws and regulations that support this policy remain in effect and are enforced with full rigor by United States Government agencies, especially the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Commerce, and more particularly by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

The main administrative provisions and congressionally adopted laws establishing the embargo policy are the following:

- The Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) of 1917, section 5 (b) of which provides that the President may impose economic sanctions, in time of war or any other national emergency, and it prohibits trading with the enemy or with allies of the enemy during hostilities. In 1977, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act restricted the powers of the President to impose new sanctions, referring to national emergency situations. However, the TWEA has remained in effect against Cuba, even though the White House has never declared a national emergency with respect to Cuba. Since 1959, successive United States Presidents have extended application of the TWEA to Cuba. Under cover of that legislation, the oldest of its kind, the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) were adopted in 1963: they prohibited United States nationals or persons subject to United States jurisdiction from conducting financial transactions with Cuba, they froze Cuban assets, and they banned the import of goods of Cuban origin into the United States, among other restrictions. Cuba is the only country to which this legislation applies. On 5 September 2014 President Obama renewed the sanctions against Cuba for another year, by virtue of the TWEA.

- The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 authorized the United States President to establish and maintain a total embargo upon trade with Cuba, and prohibited the granting of any aid to the Cuban Government. It provided that United States Government funds earmarked for international aid and delivered to international agencies could not be used for programmes relating to Cuba. It prohibited the granting to Cuba of any assistance mentioned in that law or any other benefit mentioned in any other law, until such time as the President determined that Cuba had taken action to return to United States citizens and entities no less than 50 per cent of the value of properties nationalized by the Cuban Government following the triumph of the Revolution, or to provide equitable compensation for such properties.

- Presidential Proclamation 3447, issued on 3 February 1962 by President John F. Kennedy, decreed a total embargo on trade between the United States and Cuba, pursuant to section 620 (a) of the Foreign Assistance Act.

- The Cuban Assets Control Regulations of the Department of the Treasury (1963) froze all Cuban assets in the United States, prohibited all financial and commercial transactions unless approved by a licence, prohibited Cuban exports to the United States, and prohibited any natural or legal person of the United States or third parties from conducting transactions in United States dollars with Cuba, among other provisions.

- The Export Administration Act of 1979. Under Section 2401(b)(1), "National Security Controls", "Policy toward individual countries", a "Commerce Control List" is established, on which the United States President keeps a number of countries for which special export controls may be imposed for reasons of national security. Cuba is included on that list.
- The Export Administration Regulations (EAR) of 1979 establish the grounds for general controls over items and activities subject to EAR control, consistent with the sanctions imposed by the United States Government. They establish a general policy of denying exports and re-exports to Cuba.
- The Cuban Democracy Act ("Torricelli Law") of 1992 prohibits the subsidiaries of United States companies in third countries from trading in goods with Cuba or with Cuban nationals. It bans third-country vessels that have visited a Cuban port from entering United States territory within 180 days, except for those that have a licence from the Secretary of the Treasury.
- The Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act ("Helms-Burton Act") of 1996 codifies the provisions of the embargo, expands its extraterritorial scope and limits the prerogatives of the President to suspend that policy. Nevertheless, the text of the legislation provides that the President retains his prerogative to authorize transactions with Cuba through the issuance of licences.
- Section 211 of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1999 prohibits registration in the United States of trademarks associated with nationalized properties and bars recognition by United States courts of the rights of Cuban enterprises over these trademarks.
- The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 authorizes the export of agricultural products to Cuba, conditional upon payment in cash and in advance, and without United States financing. It prohibits travel to Cuba for tourist activities by United States persons, establishing 12 categories of authorized travel.

1.2. Executive measures taken by President Barack Obama and their limitations

In his announcement of 17 December 2014, President Obama recognized the failure of policy toward Cuba and undertook to engage in discussions with Congress to lift the embargo. As part of that approach, the President announced various measures to modify enforcement of some aspects of the embargo. Amendments to the regulations of the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Commerce, intended to implement the President's decision, came into effect on 16 January 2015. While they constitute a positive step forward, these measures have limitations.

With respect to travel, United States persons who fall within the12 categories of persons authorized to visit Cuba may do so under a general licence. Travellers will no longer be subject to limits on spending in the country, and they may use credit and debit cards. However, the ban on tourist travel remains, as do the restrictions on "people to people" educational exchanges, meaning that such persons must travel in groups with a strictly regimented programme of activities.

In the telecommunications sector, exports of products and services to Cuba have been authorized, as well as financing for the creation of infrastructure

facilities. The main limitation here is the requirement for advance payment in cash, even when there is a possibility that foreign or United States banks located outside the United States could provide financing for these purchases. This is not consistent with international trade practices, where this form of payment is not used and where it is the companies themselves that provide credit to buyers to ensure the sale of their products and services. The possibility of concluding such transactions is complicated by the banks' fear of conducting transactions with Cuba, given the policy of financial harassment applied under the Government of President Obama.

When it comes to trade, the list of United States products that, with the new measures in place, may be exported to Cuba without the need to seek authorization from the Department of Commerce is confined to telecommunications products and services, construction materials, and equipment and tools for use by the non-state sector of the economy, including agriculture. The sale of other United States products and services to Cuba is prohibited, unless authorized by the Department of Commerce through the issuance of specific licences, which expire within a fixed time limit. The terms of payment remain discriminatory when compared with international trade practice, given the prohibition on using the United States dollar as a currency of payment and the impossibility of receiving credits for the purchase of authorized products and services. Both of these limitations could be eliminated by executive measures without the need to appeal to Congress.

In addition, the authorization to import Cuban goods and services produced by the non-state sector excludes items of key importance for the Cuban economy, such as tobacco. The refusal to consider the state sector of the economy means that the list omits other Cuban goods and services of recognized international prestige such as rum, nickel, biotechnology products and medical and education services. Moreover, the tariff that would be applied to Cuban products, if they were allowed to enter United States territory, would be set at the highest rates of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the Department of the Treasury, as Cuba is the only country, along with the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, that is placed at the most restrictive level of duties for import into the United States, and it is not accorded most favoured nation treatment.

Similarly, the amendments to the maritime transportation regulations, which allow vessels engaged in humanitarian trade with Cuba to enter a United States port before 180 days, are inoperable. It is unlikely that vessels carrying commercial cargoes to a country will confine themselves to transporting food, medicines, medical equipment and other exports that are authorized by the United States. International practice indicates that contracts with shipping companies cannot be restricted to the transportation of only one kind of product.

As well, changes in the financial area are limited to facilitating the processing of authorized transactions relating to travel, exports and remittances. Even though the new regulations would allow United States banks to open correspondent accounts in Cuban financial institutions, there would be no reciprocity with Cuban banks, as the latter are required to obtain a licence in order to open accounts in United States banks.

President Obama's decision to exclude Cuba from the list of state sponsors of international terrorism represents a gesture of historic justice to the Cuban people. Nevertheless, that decision does not imply any easing of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. The majority of laws and regulations

establishing the policy of economic strangulation were issued prior to 1982, when Cuba was designated as a state sponsor of terrorism and, consequently, the sanctions and restrictions imposed because of that classification were already part of the embargo against Cuba. This has in fact been recognized by officials of the United States Government: Jeff Rathke, the State Department's Press Office Director, for example, has noted that "the lifting of the state sponsor of terrorism designation does not lift the embargo, just to put that kind of bluntly".[1]

All of this reaffirms that the President of the United States has broad executive powers to make changes in the enforcement of the embargo regulations, and to go further than he has to date.

Although the measures adopted by the United States Government in January 2015 constitute a step forward in modifying application of some aspects of the embargo, in order for them to be implemented and to produce results it is essential to adjust the regulations to the real conditions in Cuba and to international trade practice. Unless other aspects of the embargo are modified, such as access to credits, the possibility of importing and exporting under normal conditions from and to the United States, authorization to use the dollar and a halt to the financial persecution against Cuba's international transactions, there will be no substantial change in the economic blockade to which Cuba remains subjected by the embargo laws and regulations.

1.3. Prerogatives of the United States President to make further changes in the enforcement of the embargo without the need to appeal to Congress

While the United States Congress is the body empowered to revoke the legislation underlying the Cuba embargo policy, and to end the embargo, such an act can be preceded by a dismantling of the vast majority of the restrictions that comprise the policy, through executive actions.

With President William Clinton's signature of the Helms-Burton Act on 12 March 1996, the embargo against Cuba and the string of executive orders supporting it were codified in law. However, that same law preserved the broad powers of the President to issue licences allowing various transactions prohibited by the embargo.

Following is a list of some of the executive powers to which the President of the United States may resort to modify implementation of the Cuba embargo policy. He may:

1. Authorize use of the United States dollar in Cuba's international transactions.
2. Allow these transactions to be conducted through the United States banking system.
3. Enable Cuban entities (banks, enterprises etc.) to open correspondent accounts in United States banks.
4. Instruct United States representatives to international financial institutions not to block the granting of loans or other financing facilities to Cuba.

[1] Jeff Rathke, Director of the Office of Press Relations of the Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 29 May 2015, Washington, D.C.

5. Reverse the policy of financial persecution against Cuba.

6. Authorize Cuban aircraft and vessels to carry passengers, freight and mail between the two countries.

7. Authorize the direct export of United States products to Cuba.

8. Allow Cuba to import from third countries products that contain United States components in a proportion exceeding 10 per cent.

9. Allow the import into the United States of Cuban services and goods that constitute exportable items of the Cuban economy such as tobacco, rum, biotechnology products, including products manufactured in third countries that contain Cuban raw materials such as nickel or sugar.

10. Authorize United States companies to invest in Cuba.

11. Eliminate the ceiling on the value of Cuban products that may be imported for personal use or as gifts by United States travellers visiting Cuba.

12. Authorize United States citizens to receive medical treatment in Cuba.

13. Allow the granting of credits, loans and financing in general to Cuba for the purchase of products on the United States market (with the exception of agricultural products, which are prohibited by law).

These actions show that the framework of the embargo can be substantially modified if the United States President uses his broad executive powers. This procedure could be used to dismantle a good portion of the economic, financial and commercial restrictions that the United States Government maintains against Cuba.

There are only four aspects of the embargo that are beyond the reach of presidential decisions, as they are regulated by laws that require congressional action in order to eliminate or modify them. These are:

1. The rule that prohibits United States subsidiaries in third countries from trading with Cuba (Torricelli Law).

2. The ban on transactions with United States properties that were nationalized in Cuba (Helms-Burton Act).

3. The law that prevents United States citizens from visiting Cuba as tourists (Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000).

4. The requirement to pay cash in advance for Cuban purchases of agricultural products in the United States (Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000).

In addition to these aspects, which cannot be modified by the President, the Congress may approve new laws that strengthen the Cuban embargo regulations or obstruct their dismantling. This is evident in the recent attempts by a group of members of Congress to promote legislative initiatives intended to reverse the measures announced by the President and to reinforce the economic blockade of Cuba.

The process of normalizing bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States will necessarily entail a lifting of the embargo, which constitutes a major obstacle for Cuba's economic, commercial and financial relations with the United

States and with the rest of the world, and for development of the full potential of the Cuban economy.

1.4. Principal embargo measures applied since 17 December 2014

Since 17 December 2014, the embargo against Cuba has remained in force, as demonstrated by the following examples of the effects of that policy on Cuban entities and on third parties:

- The United States firm Gen Tech Scientific refused the sale of Agilent 5975C gas chromatography systems used for biochemical, pharmaceutical and medical research and diagnoses, citing the State Department's ban on sales to Cuba. That response was given just days after announcement of the decision to restore relations between Cuba and the United States.
- On 28 January 2015, it was reported that the United States company PayPal had frozen the account of two Canadian gardeners, Brian and Jan Ficht, after they used it to pay for a three-week trip to Cuba to learn about urban agriculture.
- On 11 February 2015, it transpired that the Mexican subsidiary of the Banco Santander bank had refused to make a transfer of euros 68,290, issued by the Central Bank of Cuba, to pay for its membership in the Centre for Latin American Monetary Studies (CEMLA).
- On 26 February 2015, the United States firm PayPal rejected a transfer of euros 90 issued by the Cuba solidarity group in Germany, Cuba-Hilfe-Dortmund, because of the embargo regulations.
- On 12 March 2015, the German bank Commerzbank entered into agreements with the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Justice, the New York Department of Financial Services, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office to pay a fine of US$ 1,710,000,000 for violating the regulations against Iran, Sudan, Myanmar and Cuba. According to the report from the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), between September 2005 and December 2007 Commerzbank processed 56 transactions relating to Cuba, for a total amount of US$ 2,283,456,000. As a result of that fine, and following the cessation of operations with Cuba, Cuban funds amounting to 50,000 pounds sterling and 53,000 Swiss francs were immobilized in that bank, and they could neither be converted into euros or used to make payments. Due to the embargo laws, this bank has not found a way to transfer these funds to accounts in other European banks, as they refuse to conduct operations with Cuba. The situation has affected the country, denying it the ability to make foreign payments for the last nine months.
- On 25 March 2015, the OFAC imposed a fine of US$ 7,658,300 on the United States company PayPal for violating the regulations against Cuba as well as other sanctions programmes. According to the OFAC report, between December 2010 and September 2013, PayPal processed 98 transactions involving goods of Cuban origin or of Cuban national interest, and the amount of US$ 19,344.
- On 26 March 2015, it was reported that funds transferred from Cuba to finance the current expenses of its embassies in Kiribati, Equatorial Guinea and Kazakhstan were rejected by various banks, due to the embargo regulations against Cuba.

- On 1 June 2015, the United States company Sigma Aldrich, one of the world's leading producers of chemicals and biochemicals, refused to supply the Cuban firm Quimimpex with chemical products essential for the development of the Cuban chemicals industry. Sigma-Aldrich argued that it could not provide products, services or technical information, as Cuba is an embargoed country to which it is prohibited to export, re-export, sell or supply goods, technologies or services directly or indirectly from the United States, or through any United States person, regardless of where that person is located.
- On 2 June 2015 the United States firm Columbiana Boiler Company LLC, specialized in the manufacture of pressure vessels, refused to supply the Cuban firm Quimimpex with the cylinders needed to hold the chlorine that is used for treating drinking water in the aqueducts system, indicating that it was not allowed to ship products to Cuba. In its response it noted that, although it had contacted the Department of Commerce, it had not yet received authorization to ship products to Cuba.
- In June 2015 the Japanese branch of the United States superstore chain Costco Wholesale reported that it had suspended the membership of an official of the Cuban Embassy in Japan, invoking the United States law to justify that senseless action.

II. The embargo violates the rights of the Cuban people: damage to the sectors of greatest social impact

> "The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized."[2]

The embargo continues to be an absurd and morally insupportable policy which, as the United States President has recognized, has not served the purpose of breaking the Cuban people's determination to choose their own political system and control their own future. This chapter summarizes the effects on the rights of the Cuban people in sectors of vital importance for the country.

2.1. The right to health and food

Since the triumph of the Revolution in 1959, the Cuban people's right to health and to food has been a top priority, as part of the essence of the Cuban revolution, and as demonstrated by the results that have been achieved over the intervening years, the indicators of which have been internationally recognized. Even in the most adverse economic times, the revolutionary Government has invested vast amounts of financial, material and human resources to guarantee the sustainability of essential health and food services, which has been compromised by the genocidal economic, financial and commercial blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States.

In the public health sector, the cumulative monetary impact since the beginning of the embargo is US$ 2,541,000,000, while during the period analysed in

[2] Declaration on the Right to Development, Article 1, Paragraph 1.

this report the damage amounted to US$ 76,897,734. Yet it is difficult to calculate the humanitarian impact of the embargo, taking into account the persons and families who have been affected by this unfair policy despite the enormous efforts of physicians, specialists, technicians and other professionals dedicated to saving lives.

These impacts manifest themselves from time to time in the need to purchase medicines, reagents, spare parts for diagnostic and treatment equipment, instruments and other inputs from distant markets. In addition, the country has to work through intermediaries, incurring unnecessary expenses in the sector, and occasionally delaying treatment for patients.

The embargo also violates the rights of United States citizens, who are denied the opportunity to receive lower-cost, high-quality medical services in Cuba. As well, citizens of that country often face difficulties in enrolling, on a self-financed basis, in postgraduate or undergraduate courses in Cuban medical universities.

These problems also affect the citizens of other countries and they have an adverse impact on the Cuban economy as well. In the area of patient care and academic services alone, Cuba has forgone revenues of US$ 27,645,000 in the period covered by this report.

Following are some of the many examples of impacts that the embargo has had on the Cuban people's right to health:

- The Frank País International Orthopaedic Science Complex reports difficulties in acquiring prosthetic devices for wrist and hand joints in patients with rheumatoid arthritis, as the market for this type of prosthesis is dominated by United States firms such as Small Bone Innovation Inc. (SBi). The European branch of SBi refused to supply this product to Cuba. As a result of this obstacle, patients needing this prosthesis must travel abroad or undergo palliative operations to treat their afflictions, which may mean that their health problem will not be resolved, or that their costs will increase.

- The International Neurological Restoration Centre (CIREN) reports that, according to the Good Clinical Practices Guide, treatment with botulinum toxin (BTX) is the preferred treatment for spasticity, a symptom present in more than 80 per cent of patients with neurological illnesses. Today, BTX is the indicated medication for the treatment of more than 50 diseases. The Centre cannot buy BTX of the Botox trademark directly in the United States. To acquire it, it must purchase it through a third country, which increases the price from US$ 200 to US$ 500. Although the firms producing BTX around the world have diversified, and the international market now offers such brands as Neurobloc, Xeomin, and Dysport, Botox remains the highest-quality botulinum toxin.

- The "Dr. Rafael Estrada" Neurology and Neurosurgery Institute reports that, during the period covered by this report, its neurobiology department was unable to purchase CanAg NSE EI, a laboratory kit produced by the United States firm Fujirebio Diagnostics Inc. This kit is used to detect the neuron-specific enolase (NSE) protein in serums and in cerebrospinal fluid as a diagnosis and prognosis marker for ischemic cerebrovascular diseases, which show high rates of mortality and morbidity in Cuba. The Institute was also unable to acquire electromyography equipment from the Canadian firm XLTEK, because that firm was taken over by the United States company Natus

Medical Inc. This has made it impossible to perform certain procedures such as evaluating the electrical activity of the skeletal muscles in patients with neuromuscular afflictions, one of the clinical evaluations most frequently performed in that Institute's care services.

- The Haematology and Immunology Institute is unable to monitor the effects of the drug Methotrexate (MTX), used for the treatment of leukaemia and other lymphoproliferative syndromes, because the Institute has not been able to access diagnostic systems such as ARK Methotrexate Assay from the firm ARK Diagnostics Inc. of California, which as a United States company cannot trade with Cuba.

- The National Centre for Electromedicine reports difficulties in acquiring parts and accessories for equipment of the Philips brand used in Cuba, as the "eparts.philips.com" online messaging service is not directly available between the United States and Cuba. Instead, it operates jointly with FedEx, and this increases the cost and slows the arrival time of any piece ordered. At the present time, spare parts must be dispatched to Europe and then returned to Cuba, even though in most cases they originate in the United States.

In addition, it must be noted that most of the medical imaging equipment is controlled by, or includes in its makeup, computers based on the 64-bit Windows XP operating system, which must be activated with Microsoft within 30 days after installation. As none of the activation options for this system are available in Cuba, this generates many technical problems that end up affecting service and lengthening patient waiting times.

- Because it lacks the necessary technological equipment due to obstacles imposed by the embargo, the National Centre for Medical Genetics has had to send samples to foreign laboratories in order to diagnose genetic diseases, and this has generated additional shipping and analysis costs.

As an example, the Applied Biosystems company rejected a Cuban request for a genetic analyser. In the absence of this equipment, laboratory research and care services of the Molecular Biology Centre have been affected through its inability to conduct clinical studies on hereditary breast cancer, familial adenomatous polyposis, hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer, von Hippel-Lindau syndrome, Wilson's disease, cystic fibrosis, Gaucher's disease, classic galactosaemia, diseases of mitochondrial origin, retinitis pigmentosa linked to the X. chromosome, and Usher's disease, among others. As a result of this situation samples have had to be sent to other countries for diagnosis.

Since 2008, this laboratory has been using the free CLC Sequence Viewer programme developed by the Danish firm CLCbio, a leader in the development of bio-informatics programmes. This application can analyse protein changes produced by various DNA mutations, perform restriction analysis, create sequence alignments, and construct phylogenetic trees, among other options that are important in molecular diagnostic work. In October 2013, CLCbio was acquired by the United States company Qiagen, and since then programme updates have been unavailable, a situation that has limited the Cuban institution's access to newly incorporated services and to updated databases on restriction enzymes.

In January 2015 the institution again requested access to updates to the programme, but it was told that the United States embargo against Cuba prevented the offer of technical support services and licensing for software.

- The impacts caused by the embargo at the "William Soler" Paediatric Cardiology Centre have been intensified since it was included by the OFAC, in April 2007, in the category of "denied hospital" and conditions were imposed for the sale of products requiring a prior licence. Since that time, the firms NuMED, AGA Medical and Boston Scientific have been banned from supplying the devices that are used in diagnostic procedures and treatment by interventionist catheterism, which means that children have to undergo open-heart surgery, with greater risk of complications and mortality, and higher costs.

This institution is also unable to obtain from the United States high-quality biological materials for cardiac implants, such as biological cardiac valves. This has obliged the Cardiology Centre at times to use mechanical valves that require anticoagulants, and this increases the risk and predisposes patients to other complications.

Nor does it have access to the percutaneous gastrostomy sets made in the United States, which are essential for treating severely malnourished patients who cannot be adequately fed orally. In the absence of this product, the Cardiology Centre has been obliged to perform surgical gastrostomy on its patients.

- Thanks to the embargo, the Cardiology and Cardiovascular Surgery Institute has to do without the extraction set for pacemaker leads or electrodes and automatic implantable defibrillators from the United States company Cook. The absence of this equipment means that surgery with extracorporeal circulation has to be performed in order to remove the electrodes, thus increasing the patient's risk of complications.

- The MEDICUBA enterprise reports that, because of the embargo, brachytherapy equipment for cancer treatment cannot function normally because of the lack of the radioactive isotope indium-192, the principal supplier of which is the United States firm Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals.

The food sector remains one of those most severely affected by the United States embargo policy. The obstacles imposed on access by Cuban firms seeking to import food from international markets, including from United States producers, continue to violate the Cuban people's right to food.

Nevertheless, Cuba has one of the most comprehensive social protection programmes in the world, one that has eradicated hunger, and at the same time the country has made food security for the population a strategic priority. This is especially clear in the Cuban education system, which guarantees the availability of food in special, primary and secondary education centres with a view to promoting consumption of a healthful and nutritionally adequate diet.

This achievement was recognized for a second time by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) during the 39th session of its General Council, held in Rome, Italy, in June 2015, at which time Cuba was highlighted as one of the few developing countries to have achieved the millennium development goal relating to this topic in advance of the agreed 2015 target date.

According to the Ministry for the Food Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Cuba, the total impact of the embargo in the food sector is conservatively estimated at US$ 592,269,000. This figure reflects the shift of markets for the import of inputs for the food industry, with the consequent increase in costs and additional expenses for sea shipment, compounded by, among other factors, the onerous exchange rates that must be paid because of the ban on using the United States dollar in commercial transactions.

As the following examples show, this sector, given its particular nature, has been one of the main targets of the embargo policy:

- The Cuban rice industry suffered damage amounting to US$ 3,306,900 during the period under review, with the decline in output due to the impossibility of acquiring on the United States market the spare parts, accessories and technological equipment that are available there at better quality and lower prices than on other markets.
- In 2014 the import of seeds, essentially for potatoes and garden produce, from distant markets such as Europe and Japan represented an impact of US$ 1,175,900 solely for shipping charges. The embargo measures make it impossible to purchase these products on the United States market, and this leads in addition to delays in programmes for sowing some important crops.
- Similarly, during the period under review the pork breeding industry suffered impacts of US$ 6,573,400, as pig feed had to be purchased in third countries at prices higher than those offered on the United States market. As well, the ban on access to the United States market has limited access to advanced swine-breeding technologies, food manufacture and distribution systems, medications and other inputs.
- The Cuban poultry industry was affected to the extent of US$ 23,000 due to the inability to apply vaccines to the flocks and thereby avoid losses occasioned by the infectious bursal (Gumboro) disease while the United States Government maintains the ban on direct sales to Cuba by producers of vaccines, medicines and diagnostic kits for preventing and combating avian diseases.

2.2. The right to education, sports and culture

The Constitution of the Republic of Cuba enshrines the inalienable right of Cubans to education, culture and sports as a fundamental principle of the Revolution. However, the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States constitutes a significant attack on this right of the Cuban people.

Although the Cuban Revolution's achievements in these areas are internationally recognized, along with its contribution to the well-being of other peoples of the world, it is no less true that those achievements have been affected in terms of quality and scale by the embargo policy.

The main effects reported in the education sector are occasioned by, among other factors, the need to pay exorbitant freight charges for transportation of products purchased on distant markets, the lack or the inadequacy of certain means and resources for teaching and research, due to their higher costs in other markets, limited access to scientific information and computer tools needed for educational

multimedia production, and obstacles to receiving payment for professional services provided abroad.

Following are some examples of the damage caused in this sector:

- The Ministry of Education incurred an expenditure of US$ 1,942,800 solely for transporting containers with education inputs from distant markets. To acquire and transfer these goods from the southern United States would mean a significant reduction in shipping distance and a sharp decrease in freight costs, reducing outlays by 39.72 per cent. In order to have a more accurate idea of the social importance of this loss, it is enough to say that this amount would have covered the purchase of essential teaching materials for 162 childcare centres. Because of the economic impact described above, it was possible to contract resources for only 60 childcare centres.
- The National Agricultural Health Centre (CENSA) reports that it has to pay between 30 per cent and 45 per cent above the world market price for purchases in third countries of the reagents that its laboratories must use, and which are produced by the United States companies Promega, Sigma, Invitrogen, Giagen, Hyclone, Alconox and Agdia.
- The University of Havana has no access to the protein purification equipment needed for the Protein Research Centre, as these are available only from the United States company General Electric.
- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was prevented on two occasions from purchasing the equipment needed for the Internet Reactor Laboratory project it is undertaking with the Instituto Superior de Tecnologías y Ciencias Aplicadas (INSTEC, Cuba's applied science and technology institute), as the United States content of that equipment exceeds 10 per cent.
- Satellite images of the Landsat type that appear on United States servers, and that are essential for obtaining real-time spatial information on the Cuban territory cannot be accessed from Cuban sites, and this situation is hindering the development of scientific and teaching activities.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba also entails severe impacts on the development of sports in Cuba.

Following are some examples of the damage caused by the embargo in this sector:

- Cuban sports institutions have no access to the United States market for sporting implements, equipment and clothing such as pads for pole vaulting and high jumping, collapsible trampolines of the Multimarc brand for artistic gymnastics, special bicycles of the Cannondale brand, electronic equipment for measuring athletic performance, and other items.
- The Cuban team from Pinar del Rio, the champion in the Caribbean Baseball Series held in February 2015, and Frederick Cepeda, voted the most valuable player at that event, were unable to collect their prizes because of embargo-imposed restrictions. The same fate awaited the Cuban athletes who won prizes at the World Relays and in the World Indoor Championships, held in 2014, because the bank used by the international federation for that sport belongs to the United States and it blocked the funds. The prizes were valued at US$ 190,000.

- For Cuba's national baseball series, thousands of Japanese baseballs of the Mizuno brand were purchased, at a cost of US$ 9.50 each. However, the Japanese brand could be replaced by baseballs of the Wilson brand, at a cost of US$ 5.80 each. Cuban attempts to purchase this equipment in Costa Rica have been unsuccessful. The manufacturers have claimed that they cannot trade with Cuba, as they make this baseball for the above-mentioned United States brand.
- Between June and September 2014, four visits by United States sporting groups interested in going head-to-head with Cuban athletes had to be cancelled because the organizers were denied licences by the OFAC.
- The Sports Medicine Institute, in its efforts to ensure the sustainable development of Cuban sports in the area of sports medicine and to achieve the highest levels of health and sporting performance among active and retired athletes, needs technological supports that are to a large extent produced in the United States. Because of the embargo, it is difficult or impossible for the Institute to acquire the following products:
    - Reagents and benchmarking substances for the work of the anti-doping laboratory, and spare parts needed to repair a high-pressure liquid chromatography (HPLC) system, a mass spectrometer and a gas chromatograph with NPD detector from the United States firm Agilent Technologies.
    - Parts for repairing isotope-ratio mass spectrometry equipment used in the detection of endogenous steroids of synthetic origin, from the German firm Finnigan, a subsidiary of Thermoquest which is based in Austin, Texas.
    - Monoclonal antibodies for determining human erythropoietin, produced solely by United States firms, as well as nutrients and supplements for athletes, which must be purchased in third countries at considerably higher cost.

Despite the country's great achievements in the culture sector, it is important to recognize the impact and the limitations caused by the embargo in this sector. In the period under review, that policy caused total damage of US$ 24,727,300 in this area.

Basic studio materials for training artists are among the most expensive educational inputs in the world. The embargo has consistently posed problems for obtaining teaching materials, instruments and inputs essential to guarantee artistic training in Cuba. Musical instruments, oil and acrylic paints and paintbrushes for the plastic arts, and shoes and costumes for ballet and dance students, for example, are part of a long list of inputs and materials that the embargo denies to students of the arts in Cuba.

The United States market could also be a prime source of supply for an important group of raw materials, inputs, tools and equipment that are used by artists, artisans, restorers and designers in their efforts to rescue the national heritage. Because it is impossible to acquire these products in the United States, Cuban institutions are obliged to spend more resources in order to purchase them in other markets, where prices are higher and shipping is more costly.

The embargo also places limitations on academic exchanges and on participation by Cuban artists in competitions and events in the United States. It

bans the negotiation of cultural agreements between teaching institutions in the two countries, which would foster the cultural development and artistic creation of the Cuban people. In addition, when Cuban cultural figures are invited to events in the United States, they are frequently unable to attend because it is impossible, or takes too long, to acquire a visa. The embargo also prevents United States institutions and readers from subscribing to and receiving Cuban publications of interest to universities and cultural and scientific institutions.

Following are some examples of the embargo's adverse impact on the development of Cuban culture:

- The impossibility of accessing digital music wholesale distribution companies in the United States, and the need to use intermediaries, has resulted in lower profit margins for the *Soy Cubano* ("I am Cuban") digital music wholesale distribution service belonging to ARTex S.A These damages amount to US$ 50 million.
- The ability to acquire products in the United States market could generate savings that would benefit the country's cultural development, as can be appreciated through the following examples:
    - In the United States market, the price of a Vandoren 10 Sax ZZ Reed #2.5 saxophone is US$ 249, while the Selmer SAS280R La Voix II Saxophone — Clear Lacquer costs US$ 250.06. Currently, Cuba is buying both of these instruments in third countries at a cost of US$ 356. If each of the 334 students who use this instrument in Cuba could purchase a saxophone in the United States, this would imply a savings of US$ 35,000.
    - In the United States, a Yamaha MG16 Mixing Board 16 CH piano costs approximately US$ 1.100. Cuba is currently paying US$ 4,442 per unit for the lower-quality WBR model GP-160 W piano. Considering that around 40 units are needed for the current class of pianists, the impact of the embargo is around US$ 133,700.

2.3. The right to development

Tourism, transportation, mining, renewable energy and telecommunications are among the sectors of the Cuban economy where development is being held back by the embargo. This section addresses some of the cases in which the unfair United States policy has an adverse impact on Cuba's right to development.

During the period under review, tourism continued to suffer severe losses in important areas relating to services, operations and logistics that are decisive for this economic activity. Losses amounted to US$ 1,506,940,000.

Although the agreements between the governments of Cuba and the United States, announced by the Presidents of both countries on 17 December, create conditions favourable to a significant increase in United States visitors to Cuba, it is important to note that the embargo still prohibits tourism travel to Cuba. The measures adopted in this area by the United States executive are confined to the issuance of general licences for the 12 categories of authorized travel, which means that a specific permit to travel is not needed for these categories.

If it were not for the embargo regulations, Cuba would benefit from the 140 cruise ships that operate each week in the Caribbean area, the market for which is primarily the United States. Cuba could take advantage of the operating capacity created to host approximately 1,200,000 cruise passengers, and to receive 1,092 cruise ship landings in a year, which would generate income amounting to US$ 139,882,795.

For the acquisition of automotive equipment, parts and accessories in distant markets, the tourism transportation group Transtur estimates the additional cost at some US$ 207,540.

Because of the embargo, Cuban hotels can use only the Amadeus reservations system, one of the four main global distribution systems of international scope. Three of those systems — Sabre, Galileo and Worldspan — are of United States origin. Other suppliers of these services are reluctant to do business with Cuban entities for fear of being fined and seeing their United States sales threatened.

Industry plays a key role in the country's development. During the period under review, losses to this branch of the economy were estimated at US$ 73,416,529, an amount equivalent to the Cuban industrial investment programme for 2014. These losses are due primarily to the geographic shift of markets, the immobilization of resources in inventories, and exchange rate fluctuations in external trade and financial transactions associated with avoiding use of the dollar.

In the period covered by this report alone, the Cuban firm Acinox Comercial suffered losses of US$ 33,494,647 from the causes described above. This amount would have been enough to purchase 31,628 tons of galvanized sheet steel for the self-build housing construction programme, enough to cover 69,582 dwellings for the benefit of 278,328 Cubans, taking as the standard four persons per house.

In the period under review, the Grupo Empresarial de la Industria Sideromécanica steel industry group (GESIME) estimated damage at US$ 48,471,438, an amount that would have been sufficient to purchase:

- 454,545 aluminium alloy discs 1050 for the manufacture of induction stoves, or
- 7,000 component kits for the manufacture or repair of hospital beds, or
- 3,500 component kits for the manufacture or repair of intensive therapy beds, or
- 154 sugarcane harvesters, or
- 15,900 domestic refrigerators for the public replacement plan.

The Chinese firm Ja Solar, a leading producer of solar panels, turned down a request for photovoltaic materials, on the grounds that the firm is quoted on the United States stock exchange, and that any direct relationship with a Cuban enterprise replace it at risk. This purchase was intended for the production of photovoltaic modules for solar energy farms, as part of the country's effort to increase the use of renewable sources for generating electricity.

The acquisition of the Grupo Flint Iberia S.A by the United States company Goldman Sachs Merchant Banking Division, in partnership with Koch Equity Development LLC, resulted in this group's decision to withdraw the distribution of printing inks from the Cuban importing firm Ficuba S.L, without prior notice, placing at risk the publication of *Granma*, a national newspaper in great demand in Cuba.

The transportation sector remains severely impacted by the policy of economic strangulation. During the period under review, the damage incurred amounted to US$ 520,541,000.

This reflects the ban on entry to United States ports for international shipping companies whose vessels use Cuban crews. The penalties for each day Cuban crew members spend in port are still US$ 1,500, in addition to the prohibition on coming ashore, which constitutes a violation of the agreements established by international maritime organizations.

Cancellation of the repair services that were to be performed on the LPG tanker Castel Sant'Elmo in the Cuban shipyard Caribbean Dry Dock Co. SA, on the grounds that it would be touching port in the United States following those repairs, produced a loss of around US$ 350,000.

Civil aviation is the transport sector most affected by the embargo bans and regulations. During the period under review, damage to the civil aviation industry was estimated at US$ 288,386,591.

Among the restrictions imposed by this policy on the sector are the rule that bans Cuban airlines from operating in the United States, the prevalence of laws that prohibit the acquisition of advanced technology, equipment, parts and other accessories for aircraft, and the limitation that prevents Cuban airlines from over-flying United States territory when this offers the most direct and economical route.

As well, the Cubana de Aviación S.A. company is unable to share in the benefits of the computerized air reservation systems, as the majority of them are owned wholly or in part by United States interests.

Emergency equipment installed on Cuban aircraft and manufactured by Air Cruisers Company, LLC, such as escape chutes, life rafts and life jackets, of vital importance for rescuing and saving human lives, cannot be acquired or checked in the centres set up for this purpose within United States territory or in approved maintenance stations within the region. Those procedures have to be carried out in Russia, with the attendant additional freight and customs inspection costs.

In the mining sector, the Moa Nickel S.A. company suffered damages of US$ 16,299,648 when it was unable to import from Mexicana de Cobre the sulphuric acid that is added to nickel in order to extract greater quantities of that product, because the latter firm had been taken over by United States company.

In the agriculture sector, restrictions on the availability of chemical and microbiological reagents and radiological biosafety equipment led to partial closure of the "Jorge Dimitrov" Agricultural Research Institute. As a result, part of its staff had to be relocated, and it had to suspend its production activities and its commitments to food-producing entities. The equipment for this activity could be purchased in the United States for half the cost of buying it in third countries. The situation represented a loss for the Institute of US$ 54,700.

In the communications and informatics sector, including telecommunications, damages suffered during the period under review amount US$ 57,122,900.

The losses to Empresa de Telecomunicaciones de Cuba S.A. (ETECSA) associated with forgone revenues and with the geographic redirection of trade amount to more than US$ 38 million, given the impossibility of accessing high-

performance brands and leading-edge telecommunications equipment distributed by United States firms. For similar reasons, the Cuban firm Copextel, engaged in the supply and repair of telecommunications equipment, suffered losses of US$ 2,500,000.

The embargo remains the principal obstacle to the development in Cuba of infrastructure that would allow better access to the Internet. The United States is the global centre for computer technologies and it exercises hegemonic control over the web. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICAN), which provides IP addresses and names to the rest of the world, is limited in providing services to Cuba by the laws of the United States Federal Communications Commission and the State Department.

Despite visits to Cuba by senior managers of Google, and that company's clear interest in introducing its products and services to the Cuban market, the embargo still prohibits unrestricted use of services and applications such as Google Chrome, Google Analytics and Google Play Store.

The embargo also affects Cuba's capacities to develop its water supply infrastructure. In order to purchase high-density polyethylene for the manufacture of pipes Cuba has to arrange credits, which are repayable in one year and carry high interest rates, because of the effect that the embargo has on the perception of country risk.

In November 2014, the Spanish company Sterling SIHI S.A, citing the embargo, advised Grupo BM, supplier of Cubahidráulica, that it was cancelling an order for 15 hydraulic pumps for shipment to Cuba.

Chlorine purchased from a Colombian firm had to be transported to Cuba via a third country, for fear of possible sanctions and reprisals. This situation not only jeopardized continuity in the delivery of this vital product for the treatment of water for human consumption, but also entailed an increase of US$ 120,950 in the cost of the operation due to freight charges alone.

The domestic commerce system in Cuba reported losses of US$ 80,540,000 during the period under review. Despite national efforts to minimize the impacts of the embargo in this sector, the increase in economic damages provoked by the policy has limited people's access to restaurant services, food, hygiene and cleanliness products, textiles and clothing, footwear, hardware items, toys, perfumes, paints and construction materials.

III Impacts on the external sector of the Cuban economy

3.1. External trade and foreign investments

The total damage caused by the embargo in the external trade area during the period amounts to US$ 3,850,916,429.

The indicator that shows the greatest impact is the one relating to forgone revenues from the export of goods and services, amounting to 70 per cent of total damages, or US$ 2,698,636,842.

On the other hand, the indicator that recorded the greatest percentage increase (196 per cent) was the impossibility of accessing the United States market. This

figure reflects the immobilization of significant resources in inventories needed to cover the long transport times from distant markets, the use of intermediaries and the consequent increase (282 per cent) in the cost of goods, and higher freight and insurance costs (up by 45 per cent).

The tourism, transportation and agriculture sectors were those most affected: they accounted for 50 per cent, 13 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively, of total damages in external trade.

The economic war imposed on Cuba by the United States has resulted directly in reduced flows of foreign investment to Cuba. Efforts to achieve greater levels of foreign investment are still frustrated, on one hand, by the ban on flows of United States capital to the Cuban market and, on the other hand, the fear on the part of major investors from other regions that their investments in Cuba will jeopardize their business interests in the United States.

In the absence of the embargo, Cuba's potential to receive greater volumes of foreign investment would expand considerably, despite a regional context marked by a slowdown in capital inflows. The country presents a propitious environment for increasing investment flows, thanks to the market it offers because of its geographic location, the potential for expanding its ports and the creation of a special development zone, the opening up of new sectors of the economy, the incentives, and the level of education of its human resources.

The great majority of the priority sectors in Cuba are of notable interest to United States investors. With the lifting of the embargo, Cuba could have access to raw materials, products and services needed to undertake new investments financed by the Government or by foreign capital. This would also allow the opening of the United States market to the export of Cuban goods and services.

The lifting of the embargo would also have a positive impact on development of the agroindustry sector, energy generation, modernization and expansion of hotel facilities, and implementation of research and development projects, among others.

Another major obstacle to the external sector of the Cuban economy has to do with the recognition of Cuban patents and trademarks in the United States. One of the most important bottlenecks here has been the enforcement of the well-known Section 211 of the 1999 Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.

The Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) confirmed 13 years ago that this rule violates the national treatment and most-favoured-nation obligations assumed by the United States under the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

This is the prevailing opinion within the WTO, where Section 211 is increasingly rejected, given its serious implications for the multilateral trading system, which the United States purports to defend. Every month the DSB reiterates that, in accordance with international law, the United States has the responsibility to ensure that its laws, regulations and judicial and administrative procedures are consistent with its obligations, with the WTO agreements, and with the international treaties on trademarks and patents to which the United States is party.

Draft laws have been introduced in Congress to repeal or amend Section 211: an example is Bill S-757, which was presented in the United States Senate on 17 March of this year. As with preceding bills, this one has little possibility of becoming law, and it will have no impact on the continuation of Section 211. Notwithstanding this, and the fact that the existence of Section 211 might be extended, President Obama can work with Congress to have it repealed definitively.

By virtue of Section 211, the Cuban entity Cubaexport has for many years been denied a specific licence to renew the registration of the prestigious *Havana Club* trademark, because of political considerations.

As well, pursuant to this Section and to the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002, certain claimants against the Cuban State in the United States continue to attempt to appropriate Cuban trademarks and patents for their own use, as a means of compensation.

For its part, Cuba has consistently respected, without the least discrimination, its obligations assumed under the international legal instruments relating to industrial property, and it has ensured registration in Cuba of more than 5,000 United States trademarks and patents.

Following are some examples of this policy's negative impact on the external sector of the Cuban economy:

- The premium tobacco market in the United States is the most important in the world (representing 65 per cent of the global market). It is estimated that, if export to the United States were allowed for Cuban tobacco, which is recognized worldwide for its high quality, total sales in the first year would amount to 50 million units, implying that Cuba is now forgoing income of US$ 133,400,000.
- Honey produced in Cuba enjoys international prestige thanks to the presence of a nectar-bearing flora that is rich in flavour and colour. The damage from the embargo in this activity amounts to US$ 14,279,000, due mainly to the shifting of business to the European market.
- For the same reason, the firm Stella SA, which produces cocoa butter and other derivatives, suffered losses estimated at US$ 320,000, and the firm Cítricos Caribe S.A reported damage of US$ 915,055.
- Despite the possibility of importing agricultural products and foodstuffs from the United States, the firm Alimport is facing problems generated by the onerous and highly regulated conditions under which these purchases have had to be made since 2001. It has also been affected by the financial restrictions and the loss of logistical opportunities vis-à-vis other markets. Losses to this entity were occasioned by:
    - The impossibility of obtaining credit from United States entities, multilateral agencies and other similar institutions.
    - The financing costs associated with the country risk perception, and payments on loans that carry annual interest of between 5 per cent and 6 per cent.
    - The lack of relations between Cuban and United States banks and the need to resort to intermediaries. This situation caused US$ 4 million in extra costs.

- The impossibility of making payments in dollars to third countries. Because of this constraint, and the need to seek alternatives for paying suppliers, the company suffered US$ 6 million in damage.
- Given the impossibility of obtaining financing for maintaining and increasing food purchases in the United States, such purchases must be made in countries where liquidity is available through Cuban exports, or through credits. This implies more remote sources of supply, with the consequent increase in maritime freight charges.
- The impossibility of exporting Cuban products to the United States market means that the vessels that travel to Cuba must return to the United States empty. Damage from this cause is estimated at US$ 28 million, enough to purchase 52,000 tons of frozen chicken quarters, representing 49 per cent of the basic food basket.

- The commercial enterprise Cubazucar, which is barred from the United States market and from the New York Futures Exchange and cannot use the dollar as the currency for its transactions, suffered economic losses in the amount of US$ 78,593,665.
- In the case of nickel, one of Cuba's principal exports, the United States maintains its ban on the import of any product made wholly or partially with Cuban nickel, even if manufactured in third countries.

One of Cuba's nickel-producing firms alone, in this case Empresa Comandante "Ernesto Che Guevara", exported 17,253.6 tons of nickel and cobalt, for gross revenues of US$ 270,200,000. If those sales had been delivered to the United States, the average price would have been US$ 16,440.61 per ton, generating revenues of around USUS$ 283,700,000. The loss incurred by being barred from the United States market was US$ 13,500,000.

3.2. Finance

During the period under analysis, the United States Government intensified its punitive measures relating to the persecution of Cuban assets abroad and, in particular, maintenance of the ban on use of the United States dollar.

Between April 2014 and March 2015, several correspondent banks took actions that affected the operations of Cuban banking institutions. While it is difficult to quantify a monetary impact, the fact that Cuban entities are obliged to change their usual channels for collections and payments generates difficulties, delays and additional costs in commercial transactions.

To this must be added the historic "mega-fine" of US$ 8.9 billion imposed on the French bank BNP Paribas in June 2014, which also had a multiplier effect on the unfairly assigned Cuba country risk for the sector. Many banks and financial institutions that once had relations with Cuba have preferred, in light of that fine, to steer clear of the complex fabric of regulations and licences required for handling Cuba's international financial transactions.

Some examples of the principal difficulties encountered in the day-to-day business of the country's banking institutions are the following:

- The exchange risk, due to differentials in exchange rates, and the continued impossibility of using the United States dollar as a currency of payment and invoicing.
- Closing of accounts in foreign banks, which entails the termination of correspondent relations. This happened with four banks in Europe.
- Cancellation of RMA [3] keys for SWIFT [4] services: this happened with 15 entities, 11 of which were European, two Latin American, one in Asia and one in Oceania.
- Refusal to provide banking services, observed in eight entities, of which five were European and three Latin American.
- Eleven foreign financial institutions and banks refused to confirm or advise credit card transactions: six of these were in Europe, four in Asia and one in Latin America.
- Cuban entities must access external financing under extremely onerous conditions as a result of the country risk, which is the principal element that determines the feasibility and the costs of financial transactions.
- The impossibility of using the dollar caused an increase in operational problems associated with banknotes and travellers' checks denominated in that and other currencies, issued by American Express offices in other countries. To date it has not been possible to find a satisfactory solution to these problems, which have represented an opportunity cost because the amounts cannot be credited to Cuban banks' accounts abroad. This situation could affect the continued acceptance of travellers' checks in Cuba, with a consequent impact on visitors who carry them.

In summary, during the period under analysis the Cuban banking system was affected by actions on the part of 38 foreign banks.

IV. The embargo violates international law: extraterritorial application

As demonstrated in the preceding chapter, the period covered by this report saw the continued persecution of Cuba's international commercial and financial transactions as well as harassment and reprisals against third parties for maintaining normal relations with Cuba. These actions were taken to ensure the continued imposition of United States legislation on the rest of the world, in ongoing violation of the rules of international law and the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

Between January 2009 and June 2015 alone, the embargo compelled 42 United States and foreign entities to pay US$ 13,279,148,196 in fines for maintaining relations with Cuba and other countries.

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[3] Return Merchandise Authorization used by distributors or corporations for the transaction of returning a defective product for repair or replacement or issuing a credit toward the purchase of another product.

[4] Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications, an organization that runs an international financial communications network between banks and other financial entities.

Despite the entirely fair decision of 29 May 2015 to remove Cuba from the illegal list of state sponsors of terrorism, on which it should never have been included, this has not overcome the reluctance of banks and financial institutions around the world to establish relations with Cuba, and the ban on Cuba's use of the dollar in its international transactions remains in effect.

On 6 May 2015, in a report on assets relating to state sponsors of international terrorism that were blocked during 2014, the OFAC reported that the cumulative amounts belonging to Cuba stood at US$ 270 million.

4.1. Damage to Cuban entities

- The Cuban Interests Section in Washington went for 15 months without a banking institution to guarantee its normal functioning, a situation that curtailed the performance of that office and affected consular services for Cubans living in the United States and for United States citizens interested in visiting Cuba.
- A number of banking entities in one Asian country refused processing of 181 credit card transactions issued by a Cuban bank, amounting to US$ 55 million, on the grounds that Cuba was on the list of state sponsors of terrorism compiled unilaterally and arbitrarily by the United States Government. Although those banks subsequently accepted the previously rejected documents, and in other cases they were handled by other institutions, this caused significant delays in receipt of the merchandise by Cuban enterprises.
- In August 2014, a transfer from Haiti to the Cuban enterprise Tecnosime to pay for technical assistance provided by that entity had to be made through a correspondent bank located in Germany, as the Canadian Bank of Nova Scotia refused to send it to Cuba. This operation implied a cost increase through banking commissions amounting to US$ 18,486.
- Exports from the Isotopes Centre (CENTIS) to Ecuador were held up for several months in 2014, implying lost revenues in the amount of US$ 80,000, as the customer, Medinuclear, had no alternative banking arrangements to make payments to Cuba.
- In July 2014, the World Trade Centres Association refused to accept payment by the Cuban Chamber of Commerce for its membership in that organization, arguing that it had to seek authorization from the United States authorities.
- In November 2014 it was reported that the AIU Insurance Company had refused to insure the residence of the second Head of Mission of the Cuban Embassy in Japan, because the company was part of the United States insurance concern AIG.
- As a result of financial harassment, Cubana de Aviación S.A was unable to find a bank to process in its name funds received via Visa and MasterCard. For this reason, it continued to conduct electronic trade through the services of AMF Global Items, thereby incurring high operating and financial costs.
- In the period under review, the Cuban tourism operator Havanatur was affected by Banco Santander's closing of the Havanatur Chile account, and it was unable to open a new account in another bank in that country. As well, the

HSBC bank refused to transfer payments from Havanatur UK to Cuba, and transfers from other banks were withheld.

- In November 2014 the Bank of Ireland declined to conduct transfers from the Cuban Embassy to the telephone company O2, arguing that it was impossible to make transactions that involve Cuba or the Cuban Government.
- The Cuban entity Bufete Internacional was affected by the inability to use the dollar for invoicing its services, resulting in delays in its revenue stream and inconveniences for its customers, who had to find banks with no ties to the United States. Losses on this score amounted to US$ 60,161.
- On 12 December 2014 the *New York Times* reported that the Bank of America had refused to allow a Cuban fellowship holder at Harvard University, Elaine Diaz, to keep open her bank account because it breached United States sanctions against Cuba.
- As a result of the record fine of 8.9 billion dollars imposed on the French bank BNP Paribas, a Cuban entity finds itself with blocked assets in that institution in the amount of US$ 1 million; closing of the account is postponed until those funds are returned.

4.2. Impact on international cooperation

- On 19 March 24 the Doha Bank refused to accept the transfer that the Cuban Government had been making each month for maintenance of the medical brigade in Qatar. As a result, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Cuba had to seek alternative ways of making the transfer, and this caused problems for the work of the health professionals present there.
- On 14 November 24, the Banco Santander of Madrid refused to act as the correspondent bank in a transfer issued in favour of the Cuban Embassy in Portugal, for maintenance of the Cuban medical brigade in that country.
- In December 2014 it transpired that, during roughly a month, Cuba had to pay housing and food costs for the physicians it had sent to combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, because the United States sanctions were blocking the attempts of the World Health Organization (WHO) to pay per diems to the medical personnel. This affected in particular the brigade of 165 doctors deployed in Sierra Leone.
- At the present time, a bank in Ethiopia is withholding US$ 26,686 corresponding to payment for the services of a group of Cuban professionals providing technical and professional instruction in the electricity area, because the transfers were made in United States dollars.
- The Sancti Spíritus University (UNISS) is facing delays in the payments it receives from the Angolan Government to allow young people from that country to study in Cuba, because the transfers are made through third-country banks that run the risk of sanctions and fines imposed by the United States Department of the Treasury.

4.3. Other extraterritorial impacts

- In June 2014, the ING Bank refused to perform transfers from Cubana de Aviación S.A. to the Dutch firm Techservice-B.V. through which it was making payment for overflight rights for Cuban AN-158 aircraft.
- In July 2014, the British institution Lloyds Bank blocked the transfer of euros 7,250 which the Spanish nongovernmental organization Sodepaz sought to remit for the purchase of organic sugar produced in Cuba.
- In November 2014, the AIB Bank of Ireland refused to facilitate travel insurance for Irish residents seeking to travel to Cuba, claiming they could not engage in this type of exchange with countries sanctioned by the OFAC.
- In that same month, the UniCredit Group (Bank Austria) refused to accept a transfer from the International Development Fund of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to the Banco Nacional de Cuba and the Banco Financiero Internacional, on the grounds that the OFAC sanctions obliged it to avoid establishing links with Cuban banking institutions and it was thus unable to make transfers, even in euros.
- Also in November 2014, the Banco Bisa in Bolivia refused to make transfers to Cuba requested by the firm Karivet which imports products of Cuban origin, arguing that such transfers to Cuba were not authorized in light of the OFAC sanctions.
- On 13 November 2014, the OFAC imposed a fine of US$ 2,057,540 on the United States firm ESCO Corporation headquartered in Portland, Oregon because, between November 2007 and June 2011, a subsidiary of ESCO had purchased briquettes made from Cuban nickel.
- In December 2014, the branch of Western Union in Brazil announced that Cuban citizens could not transfer money to Cuba unless they could prove that they were residents of the country from which the transfer was to be made.

V. Universal rejection of the embargo

5.1. Opposition within the United States

Various segments of United States society have consistently rejected the senseless embargo policy for many years. On the basis of the announcements of 17 December 2014 and the pursuit of discussions between Cuba and the United States to establish diplomatic relations, this domestic rejection has grown considerably.

Opinion surveys conducted by United States institutions, including the polling firm Bendixen & Amandi, Public Policy Polling, Florida International University, Hearst Corporation, the Pew Research Center and Associated Press-GfK, show that United States voters of both parties are in favour of lifting the Cuba embargo. Moreover, surveys conducted by those institutions among citizens of Cuban origin born in the United States show that a majority of them are in favour of eliminating the trade barriers imposed against Cuba. These opinion surveys also show that United States citizens are of the prevailing opinion that, among other things, the embargo has been ineffective, the ban on travelling to Cuba should be lifted, trade with Cuba should be liberalized, and diplomatic relations should be restored.

Many and varied segments of United States society have over the years supported the lifting of the embargo, and there have been many signs of solidarity with the Cuban people and their Revolution. Following are some examples of this opposition to the embargo within the United States:

- On 26 September 2014 the White House blog reported a petition in favour of ending the embargo against Cuba, qualifying that policy as "failed" and insisting that its implementation was essentially hurting the Cuban people. It noted that, although President Obama had accepted that the embargo is ineffective, he extended that policy for another year.

- On 12 October 2014 the *New York Times* published an editorial entitled "The Moment to Restore Ties to Cuba", in which it called for an immediate end to the embargo and the restoration of diplomatic relations, and referred to the significant benefits to both countries that would be had from eliminating the embargo and boosting cultural exchanges, noting that the United States has much to learn from Cuba and vice versa.

- On 23 October 2014 the Reverend Jesse Jackson wrote an article in the *Florida Courier* in which he condemned the embargo and pointed to Cuba's efforts to combat Ebola, and to the possible cooperation that the United States could establish with Cuba in this matter.

- On 17 December 2014, statements in support of the measures relating to Cuba announced by President Obama were made by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Archbishop of Miami, Thomas Werski, the President of the National Foreign Trade Council, Bill Reinsch, the President of the American Farm Bureau Federation, Bob Stallman, as well as recognized North American academics and members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). The President of the United States Chamber of Commerce, Thomas Donohue, welcomed these measures and said that his organization would continue to push for the end of the embargo.

- On 18 December 2014, the former Secretary of State, Colin Powell, declared that it was time to "turn [the] page of history" on United States-Cuban relations.

- In an interview with CNN on United States-Cuban relations, the Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker, declared that "this is the most profound policy change as it relates to Cuba in my lifetime". With respect to trade, she said that new opportunities were opening in telecommunications, in agriculture, and in the entrepreneurship field, but she recognized that, despite the new measures announced, there was still an embargo in place that would have to be lifted.

- On 7 January 2015 there was a debate in Congress on a motion in favour of restoring relations between Cuba and the United States, sponsored by Representative Barbara Lee (Democrat-California) who, along with representatives Sam Johnson (Democrat-Texas), Kathy Castor (Democrat-Florida), Sheila Jackson Lee (Democrat-Texas), Gregory Meeks (Democrat-New York), Jared Polis (Democrat-Colorado), Sam Farr (Democrat-California), Steve Cohen (Democrat-Tennessee) and Rosa DeLauro (Democrat-Colorado), supported the President's announcement and recognized the failure of the traditional policy. They noted that the new policy would bring economic benefits to the United States as well.

- On 8 January 2015 the United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba held a press conference at the National Press Club in support of lifting the embargo. The Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, attended the event. Another participant, Senator Jerry Moran (Republican.-Kansas), reiterated that the policy was ineffective and called for eliminating the embargo in order to encourage agricultural exports from the United States to Cuba. For her part, Senator Amy Klobuchar (Democrat- Minnesota) said that Cuba represented an opportunity as a new market of 11 million consumers.

- On 19 January 2015 a group of 78 influential personalities in favour of changing the policy toward Cuba, including business people, academics, former Government officials and former members of Congress and of the military, sent a letter to President Obama, congratulating him on the actions taken. The letter referred to the broad support those changes enjoyed across the political spectrum, recognizing the failure of the approach that had been followed for more than 50 years. They asked the President to work with Congress to update the legislative framework concerning Cuba, in a manner consistent with the realities of the 21st century.

- On 24 February 2015, at a joint press conference in the United States Congress, the Democratic leader of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi (Democrat-California), together with a group of Democratic members of Congress who had travelled to Cuba, agreed that there is a "very strong bipartisan sentiment" in Congress in favour of a change in relations that would help consolidate the new policy toward Cuba.

- On 3 March 2015, the Chair of the United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba, Devry Boughner, said that ending the embargo would foster United States exports to Cuba and generate opportunities in both countries. Her goal, she said, was the establishment of reciprocal trade relations.

- On 1 April 2015, a bipartisan group of five former Secretaries of Agriculture, comprising Clayton Yeutter, Dan Glyckman, Ann Veneman, Mike Espy and John R. Block, sent a letter to the chairs and minority leaders of the Senate and House agriculture committees in which they urged the lifting of the embargo. They noted that the unilateral sanctions were posing competitive disadvantages for United States exporters and businesses.

- On 7 April 2015, a group of 13 Representatives headed by Karen Bass (Democrat-California) and Barbara Lee (Democrat-California) sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry urging him to authorize the application to market the Cuban drug Heberprot-P in the United States.

- On 8 April 2015, the President of the United States Chamber of Commerce, Thomas J. Donohue, declared in Panama that he felt "optimistic" that Congress would lift the Cuba embargo before the next presidential elections in 2016. He was sure that Republican opposition could be overcome before the campaign.

In the United States Congress, the number of legislators in favour of eliminating the embargo is growing. On the basis of the presidential announcements of 17 December 2014, senators and members of the House of Representatives have presented 12 bills that demonstrate Congressional opposition to the embargo.

In most cases, these bills call directly for lifting the embargo or for eliminating the pillars of that policy, such as the restrictions on trade and on travel to Cuba by United States citizens and residents. The most significant of those initiatives are the following:

Aimed at eliminating embargo restrictions in full:

- H.R. 274, "United States-Cuba Normalization Act", presented on 12 January 2015.
- H.R. 735, "Cuba Reconciliation Act ", presented on 2 April 2015.

Aimed at eliminating restrictions on trade:

- H.R. 403, "Free Trade with Cuba Act", presented on 16 January 2015.
- H.R. 634, "Export Freedom to Cuba Act", presented on 2 February 2015.
- S. 491, "Freedom to Export to Cuba Act", presented on 12 February 2015.
- S. 1543, "Cuba Trade Act", presented on 16 June 2015.

Aimed at eliminating restrictions on travel:

- H.R. 664, "Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act", presented on 2 February 2015, and a similar bill in the Senate, S. 299, with the same title.

5.2. Opposition by the international community

The obsolete, illegal and morally reprehensible embargo policy against Cuba has provoked sharp condemnation in the international community. This unanimity of thinking has been highlighted in the special communiqués and declarations adopted in international and regional forums calling for an end to the embargo. Following are some examples:

- During the general debate opening the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly, 43 Heads of Delegation, including 19 Heads of State or Government, declared themselves in favour of lifting the embargo.
- On 28 October 2014, the General Assembly approved, for the 23rd time in succession, the resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", with 188 votes in favour, 2 against, and 3 abstentions.

During the general debate on the resolution 23 speakers took the floor, including seven representatives of regional and subregional coordination groups and organizations: the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Caribbean Community, the African Group, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR). Another 15 delegations explained their position against the embargo, after the resolution was adopted.

- On 26 September 2014 the ministers of foreign relations of the Group of 77 and China, during their annual meeting in New York on the occasion of the 69th regular session of the United Nations General Assembly, rejected in their Ministerial Declaration the implementation of the embargo against Cuba and the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against developing countries.

- On 28 November 2014, the 40th regular meeting of the Council of the Latin American Economic System (SELA), held in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, approved a Declaration on "Ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba".

- The 24th Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Veracruz, Mexico on 8 and 9 December 2014, adopted a special communiqué on the need to put an end to the embargo, including the Helms-Burton Act, reiterating the emphatic rejection of the application of laws and measures contrary to international law and urging the United States Government to do away with that policy and to comply with the 23 successive resolutions approved on this issue at the United Nations.

- The Third Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), held in Belén, Costa Rica on 28 and 29 January 2015, reaffirmed in its Political Declaration its call on the United States Government to put an end to the embargo, and went on to issue a special communiqué recognizing the announcement made on 17 December and urging President Obama to adopt all of the measures that lie within his executive powers to modify substantially the application of the blockade against Cuba, at the same time calling on the United States Congress to begin as promptly as possible a discussion on eliminating the embargo.

- At the 24th Summit of the African Union held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 30 and 31 January 2015, the Heads of State and of Government of the African Union adopted a resolution calling for the United States embargo against Cuba to be lifted.

- The Second European Union-CELAC Summit, held in Brussels, Belgium, on 10 and 11 June 2015, adopted the Brussels Declaration in which the Heads of State and of Government of those two groups welcomed the announcement made by the Presidents of the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America, Raúl Castro Ruz and Barack Obama, on the re-establishment of diplomatic relations and expressed their expectation that all necessary steps would be taken towards an early end to the embargo. With reference to resolution 69/5, they reaffirmed their well-known positions rejecting coercive measures of unilateral character as well as on the application of the extra-territorial provisions of the Helms-Burton Act. They recognized that these measures have provoked undue humanitarian hardships for the Cuban people and are damaging to the legitimate development of economic ties between Cuba, the European Union and other countries.

Conclusions

Notwithstanding the pronouncement by the United States President that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba must be lifted, that policy remains in force and it continues to have profound impacts on the Cuban economy and to limit the Cuban people's right to development. The measures promulgated by the White House to date have been of limited scope, and there is much that the United States President can still do to make substantial changes in application of the embargo by using his executive prerogatives.

The economic damage caused to the Cuban people through application of the United States economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, amounts to US$ 833,755,000,000, despite the decline in the value of gold compared to the previous period. At current prices, over all these years, the embargo has inflicted damages worth more than US$ 121,192,000,000.

Yet this figure can never reflect the pain and the suffering inflicted on the Cuban people, despite the efforts of the Cuban Government. This unjust policy continues to affect all areas of the Cuban people's economic, social and cultural life, limiting the country's possibilities to achieve sustainable development.

It has been recognized that the embargo is not merely a bilateral issue. Its extraterritorial reach, evident in the sanctions being applied to third parties even after the announcements of 17 December 2014, shows that this policy violates international law with full impunity, in particular the principle of the sovereign equality of states enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

In the United Nations General Assembly, on 23 successive occasions, an overwhelming majority of states has recognized the embargo against Cuba as a senseless, illegal and morally reprehensible policy. After more than five decades of implementation, its nature, spirit and purposes remain unaltered, generating unnecessary shortages and suffering for the Cuban people.

President Obama himself has quite rightly recognized that the antiquated approach of this policy toward Cuba must be ended. Yet the effects of the embargo are restricting Cuba's economic possibilities today just as severely as in past decades, and they are undermining its right to raise the living standards of its people.

The President of the United States should give effect to his intentions and make use of his broad executive powers to strip the embargo of its most substantive contents, and to respond to the demands of the international community with respect to this policy.

Once again, Cuba and its people are confident that they can count on the support of the international community in their legitimate demand to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States Government.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[Original: English]
[6 May 2015]

It is the consistent position of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to oppose all kinds of sanctions including economic, commercial and financial embargoes on sovereign States.

The unilateral and extraterritorial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba constitutes an obvious infringement upon the sovereignty of Cuba in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international laws, undermines the freedom of trade and navigation and the most fundamental norms of coexistence and respect among sovereign States, and represents the violation of

human rights denying the people's right to life and right to development, and thus deserves strong denunciation by the United Nations and international community.

The United States blockade policy against Cuba, which has persisted for over half a century has caused serious losses amounting to $1.126 trillion in the economic and social fields in Cuba and has also had an impact on third countries that have normal economic and trade relations with Cuba, thus remaining the main obstacle to the socioeconomic development of the country and its people's living. As such, the criminal, inhumane and anachronistic blockade policy by the US against Cuba should be terminated, without delay, in conformity with the relevant United Nations resolutions and the demands of the international community.

It is the consistent position of Member States of the United Nations including Cuba that a key element in the United States policy against Cuba, namely, the economic, commercial and financial blockade, remains intact and that therefore the normalization of the bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States will not be possible unless the blockade is lifted.

Ending the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo by the United States against Cuba is today's unanimous demand of Member States of the United Nations including Cuba which aspire to sustainable development in a peaceful environment.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea fully supports the efforts of the Government and people of Cuba to end the US embargo and will continue to further expand and develop economic and trade relations with Cuba in the future.

The DPRK reiterates its support for and solidarity with the struggles of the Government and people of Cuba to safeguard national dignity and sovereignty against the unilateral blockade by the United States.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

[Original: French]
[6 July 2015]

The Democratic Republic of the Congo fully respects the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, and in particular the principles of sovereign equality of all States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs, and freedom of international trade and international navigation.

It reiterates its position of rejecting any resolution in favour of the embargo.

In fact, the embargo imposed against Cuba for more than half a century is an obstacle to the socioeconomic development of that country. It has severe consequences for the Cuban people, inasmuch as it runs counter to the principles of the Charter and of international law, including international humanitarian law.

Moreover, the Democratic Republic of the Congo aligns itself with the will of the international community, expressed through the adoption of resolution 69/5 by 188 Member States, and it will therefore support any new resolution that seeks to break that embargo.

Djibouti

[Original: English]
[27 April 2015]

The Republic of Djibouti wishes to reaffirm its fundamental commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law. Furthermore, the Republic of Djibouti has voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 69/5 and thus has not promulgated or applied any laws of the type referred to in the preamble to the above-mentioned resolution. As such, the necessity of repealing or invalidating any such laws or measures does not arise.

Dominica

[Original: English]
[29 April 2015]

The Government of Dominica has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures which in any way hinder the freedom of trade and navigation with the Republic of Cuba.

The Government of Dominica vehemently opposes the extraterritorial enforcement of national legislation that demonstrates disregard for and undermines the sovereignty of other States. Dominica views such actions as contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the customs and the principles of sovereign equality, peaceful coexistence and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.

The Government of Dominica embraces Cuba as a State Member of the United Nations and as a member of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) and sister nations in the Caribbean Sea. The strong historic ties and solidarity in a number of areas of cooperation, such as education, health and sports, have created an enduring friendship between our peoples.

The Commonwealth of Dominica has consistently voted in favour of past resolutions on this item and voted unreservedly in favour of General Assembly resolution 69/5. The Commonwealth of Dominica expresses its continued concern at the hardship and human suffering caused by the ongoing unilateral imposition of the embargo against Cuba, despite overwhelming international support for multiple resolutions that have called for an end to this blockade.

Dominican Republic

[Original: Spanish]
[20 May 2015]

The Dominican Republic reiterates its call for the lifting of the embargo given that the status of bilateral relations between the United States and Cuba has changed and there is no justification for maintaining these unilateral measures. As long as such measures exist, the Dominican Republic will not adopt, promote or apply any provisions that involve intervening in the internal affairs of other States.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[29 May 2015]

In accordance with its standing policy of condemning the decades-long illegal embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and its people, Ecuador has not promulgated and does not have in force any law or measure that could constitute any form of economic, commercial or financial embargo against Cuba.

At the same time, Ecuador calls for the immediate and unconditional lifting of all unilateral measures imposed by the United States of America against this Caribbean nation, which are causing it serious economic and social damage and subjecting its people to a large-scale humanitarian crisis.

By consistently supporting the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on this issue, Ecuador has made manifest its position that the extraterritorial application of unilateral measures against another country, such as the measures contained in the United States act on "Cuban democracy", of 1992, and the 1996 Helms-Burton Act, is completely unacceptable.

Egypt

[Original: English]
[5 June 2015]

The Arab Republic of Egypt has voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 69/5, in line with its position that unilateral sanctions imposed outside the United Nations framework are not a course of action that Egypt can condone. The embargo constitutes a clear violation of the principles of multilateralism and is in breach of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and mutual trust.

The unjust and unjustifiable embargo causes undue economic and social hardship on the Cuban people. It also affects the vital sectors of the Cuban economy. This embargo is an anachronism from a bygone era that must be lifted. The embargo has an extended effect on companies and citizens from third countries. These extraterritorial effects violate the sovereign rights of many Member States. Egypt is deeply concerned over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo, which is an added argument in favour of the prompt elimination of those unjustified sanctions.

El Salvador

[Original: Spanish]
[13 May 2015]

The Republic of El Salvador, which is committed to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and is fully aware of the need to eliminate the unilateral implementation of economic and trade measures by one State against another that affect the development of the latter's people and free access to international trade, reaffirms its strong support for calls to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

For El Salvador, the embargo against Cuba has been and will remain a deplorable unilateral measure in the history of Latin America and the Caribbean that goes against and disrespects the principles of solidarity, cooperation, sovereignty and the right of the fraternal people of Cuba to self-determination in order to choose their own path to development, peace and justice. Therefore, current and future generations should consider the serious historical impact that the implementation of this embargo has had in all spheres.

Respect for a people's freedom to define its own history can never again be disputed. The painful experience that the Cuban people have suffered cannot and must not continue.

As members of the international community, we are currently witnessing and bringing about great changes. We are living at a decisive moment, with a new generation of global challenges and opportunities and the establishment of a new paradigm for development, cooperation and solidarity among the peoples of the world, which will be included in the development agenda beyond 2015. This agenda does not and cannot tolerate the disregard for fundamental freedoms and principles that is implicit in the harmful economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba.

El Salvador notes that, despite the long-standing unilateral measure imposed against its people, the Republic of Cuba, with its perseverance and self-determination, has managed to overcome obstacles and adversity in an exemplary manner. For this reason, El Salvador applauds Cuba for the work it has been doing to open and strengthen its economy and to improve its production processes, as well as for the improvements and advances it has made in the fields of medicine and biotechnology.

In addition, we welcome the establishment of the Mariel special development zone and are confident that it will bring unprecedented advances to the Cuban people in terms of social, economic and productive consolidation and cooperation.

In this connection, El Salvador commends the fraternal Republic of Cuba on its efforts, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law, to withstand the unilaterally imposed embargo for more than 50 years. Cuba has the respect and support of Latin America and the Caribbean and the international community, which has spoken with one voice and voted in favour of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

In this regard, El Salvador calls for the immediate lifting of this embargo, not only in observance of international law but also because, above all else, it represents an immoral act that has inflicted pain and suffering upon the Cuban people.

The Republic of El Salvador considers that actions such as the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Cuban people seriously undermine the efforts being made by the international community to promote peace; cooperation; development and social justice; human rights; political, economic and social integration; and unity and solidarity among countries.

The Republic of El Salvador recognizes the growing strength and stature of the international community's call to lift the embargo, and once more joins this call and reiterates the urgent need to end the application of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Equatorial Guinea

[Original: Spanish]
[28 May 2015]

With the Governments of the United States of America and Cuba having now manifested a mutual interest in rapprochement, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, in line with the principles of its Constitution and its firm commitment to defending and preserving the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, once again reiterates its concern at the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo that has been imposed by the United States of America against Cuba for more than half a century.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea welcomes the bilateral negotiations initiated by the two Governments in January 2015, and hopes that they truly mark the beginning of an irreversible process towards normalized relations between the two States.

The initiative by the President of the United States to engage in official talks with the Government of Cuba on the re-establishment of relations should serve as an example to all of the institutions that make up that country's government so that, together, they may reconsider the embargo that has been blocking the free socioeconomic and technological development of Cuba.

Dialogue plays a special role in international relations and is an important instrument for nations to overcome differences. We therefore call on the international community, which has repeatedly condemned this isolation of Cuba, to encourage these bilateral meetings for the reopening of the embassies of both States and the lifting of the embargo by the United States.

In its wish to see greater happiness in the world, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea reiterates its strong support for the General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Eritrea

[Original: English]
[4 May 2015]

The Government of the State of Eritrea has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 69/5.

While Eritrea views positively the recent diplomatic developments between the United States and Cuba, it is strongly opposed to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, which is inconsistent with the principles of international law and undermines the efforts of Cuba and its people to achieve all the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Eritrea joins other States in calling for the immediate repeal or invalidation of such laws or measures, which are having adverse effects on the Cuban people and on Cuban nationals living in other countries.

Ethiopia

[Original: English]
[7 May 2015]

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia views the continued imposition of an economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba as a violation of the principle of the sovereign equality of States and of non-interference in each other's domestic affairs. In addition, the embargo has caused material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba.

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia therefore wishes to see the embargo lifted in order for the people and Government of Cuba to enjoy their sovereignty in accordance with the principles and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia believes that constructive dialogue is necessary to foster mutual trust and understanding among the nations of the world.

European Union

[Original: English]
[19 May 2015]

The European Union believes that the United States trade policy towards Cuba is fundamentally a bilateral issue. This notwithstanding, the European Union and its member States have been clearly expressing their opposition to the extraterritorial extension of the United States embargo, such as that contained in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.

The unilateral measures of the United States directed against Cuba negatively affect the interests of the European Union and violate commonly accepted rules of international trade. Welcoming the bilateral rapprochement between the United States of America and Cuba, we believe the United States measures are increasingly outdated and should be ended. The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States contributes to the economic problems in Cuba, negatively affecting the living standards of the Cuban people and having consequences in the humanitarian fields as well.

In November 1996, the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted a regulation and a joint action to protect the interest of natural or legal persons resident in the European Union against the extraterritorial effects of the Helms-Burton legislation, which prohibits compliance with that legislation. Moreover, on 18 May 1998, at the European Union/United States Summit in London, a package was agreed covering waivers to titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act; a commitment by the United States administration to resist future extraterritorial legislation of that kind; and an understanding with respect to disciplines for the strengthening of investment protection. The European Union calls on the United States to implement its side of the understanding of 18 May 1998.

Fiji

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

The Government of Fiji reaffirms its support for resolution 69/5. Fiji reiterates its position that all States should refrain from imposing economic sanctions of the nature referred to in the resolution, in conformity with their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations.

Fiji has not taken any measures that might impair economic, commercial or financial relations between Cuba and Fiji. On the contrary, Fiji is intent on developing cooperative relations with all countries and in this regard fully supports the call for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba.

Gabon

[Original: French]
[5 May 2015]

Gabon voted in favour of resolution 69/5. It did so in accordance with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and pursuant to the purposes and principles of that instrument, which are based on cooperation among States. Gabon constantly strives to promote friendly relations and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States.

Gabon welcomes the progress made in the past few months, particularly the diplomatic rapprochement between Cuba and the United States of America. It also welcomes the United States authorities' manifest desire to normalize relations between the two countries and encourages both countries to advance further along this path. It remains concerned about the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and its adverse effects on the Cuban people and Cuban nationals living in other countries.

Gabon expresses its strong hope that the United Nations resolutions echoing the collective call for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba will be respected and implemented, thus allowing Cuba to participate in and benefit from international trade.

Gabon also calls on the international community to continue its efforts to ensure that relations between the two States are definitively normalized.

Gambia

[Original: English]
[30 April 2015]

The Government of the Gambia has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 69/5. Accordingly, the Gambia is opposed to the continued enactment or application of such laws, acts or measures against Cuba that impede the free flow of international trade and navigation. The embargo against Cuba contravenes the fundamental principles of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the

United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States, violating the sovereign equality of States and of non-intervention and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other Member States. The embargo has no legitimate or moral justifications given the fact that it continues to undermine the essential rights to economic emancipation and to development of the Cuban people; it must come to an immediate end.

As a responsible member of the international community, the Gambia therefore joins other Member States in calling for the immediate repeal or invalidation of such laws, measures or policies that impede the free flow of international trade and navigation as they are contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

It is our fervent desire that the relevant United Nations resolutions echoing collective concerns on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba will be respected and implemented without further delays.

Georgia

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

Georgia reaffirms its support for resolution 69/5. Georgia has not promulgated or applied laws or taken measures against Cuba that would prohibit or restrict economic, commercial or financial relations between Cuba and Georgia.

Ghana

[Original: English]
[2 June 2015]

The Republic of Ghana wishes to reaffirm its solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba in calling for an immediate end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America over the past 50 years. Ghana's position is in keeping with her firm conviction that the unilateral embargo by the United States against Cuba is contrary to the obligations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Ghana, in compliance with General Assembly resolution 69/5 and other relevant resolutions, has refrained from the promulgation and application of any legislation or instituted any measures that would adversely affect the economic, political and social interests of Cuba.

Ghana strongly believes that the indefensible embargo is morally unacceptable as it denies a sovereign State and a member of the international community the benefits derived from international trade. Ghana is therefore against the embargo and any law that it violates the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of States by other States Members of the United Nations and the fundamental rights of all nations, as sovereign equals, to define their own strategies for socioeconomic development. Ghana remains committed to these principles and as always, supports the General Assembly resolutions which, among other things, call for an end to the embargo.

Notwithstanding the economic, financial and commercial embargo, Cuba has maintained cordial and indeed mutually beneficial relations with several African countries, including Ghana. Ghana's relations with Cuba have over time been strengthened through important technical and scientific cooperation programmes in the areas of health, education and agriculture, which have contributed immensely to national development efforts.

Consistently, international challenges and developments have reaffirmed the significance of cooperation, multilateralism, interdependence and diversity in all global endeavours. All States therefore need to be mindful of the importance of every nation, irrespective of its size and might, to ensure that relations between and among States, within the community of nations are founded on mutual respect, trust and dignity.

The recent overtures made by the United States of America towards Cuba in restoring diplomatic ties are very commendable. The easing of travel restrictions on United States nationals as well as the removal of Cuba from the list of State sponsors of international terrorism is a bold step made by the United States of America towards normalization of relations with Cuba. Ghana is optimistic that the above actions could be a precursor to the eventual lifting of the embargo against Cuba.

Grenada

[Original: English]
[21 May 2015]

Grenada, as a sovereign, independent State with a firm conviction in the sovereign equality of States, continues to recognize, uphold and adhere to the principles of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States.

In this regard, Grenada has welcomed moves by the United States and Cuba towards a rapprochement in their relations and towards the genuine cognizance of the sovereign equality of the Republic of Cuba by the United States of America. Grenada reiterates that it neither promulgates, applies nor condones laws and measures that encroach on or undermine the sovereign rights of any State, and laws that restrict and hinder international trade or navigation by any State. Therefore, Grenada issues another clarion call for the removal of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Government and people of Cuba by the United States of America.

For more than 50 years, the measures contained in this embargo have created untold hardship against the Cuban people and have being counter-productive to the goal of human development; violate the sovereign rights of all Cubans; contravene the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states; and do not lend credence towards the moves to rapprochement by the United States and Cuba and the peaceful coexistence of both countries within a stable international society.

Grenada thus unreservedly supports resolution 69/5, in which the General Assembly calls for strict compliance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and speaks to the necessity of ending said economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. Grenada adds its voice to that of the international community in expressing the hope that, within the near future, this unilateral imposition would be an imposition of the past, within the spirit of true and sincere rapprochement.

Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]
[5 May 2015]

The Republic of Guatemala, pursuant to resolution 69/5, wishes to report that the State of Guatemala has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures contrary to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations or contrary to the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Therefore, Guatemala is able to state that there are no legal or regulatory impediments to free transit or trade between Guatemala and Cuba.

Guatemala rejects any unilateral measure that runs counter to the principles of international law and free trade and urges those countries that continue to maintain such provisions in their domestic legislation to take the necessary steps to abrogate or rescind them.

Guatemala welcomes the efforts aimed at restoring full economic, trade and diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba.

Guinea

[Original: French]
[2 June 2015]

On the basis of resolutions adopted by several organizations and governmental bodies, the Government of Guinea, like the vast majority of States Members of the United Nations that have issued declarations, supports the efforts undertaken by the international community to bring about the timely and unconditional lifting of the unjust embargo imposed on the Cuban people.

Indeed, the economic, commercial and financial sanctions suffered by the courageous Cuban people for decades are not only a violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also have serious consequences for the economy, social life, culture, progress and prosperity of this brotherly country.

For those reasons, the Republic of Guinea welcomes the international consensus in favour of the Cuban cause on this issue, reflected in the adoption of General Assembly resolution 69/5 of 28 October 2014.

In addition, Guinea welcomes the historic decision to restore relations taken by the Governments of the Republic of Cuba and the United States. In view of this significant progress, all States should refrain from applying laws and measures adopted in the context of the embargo, which has become anachronistic and groundless.

Lastly, Guinea encourages the United States authorities to settle all outstanding issues relating to this irreversible process.

Guinea-Bissau

[Original: French]
[19 June 2015]

Guinea-Bissau should like once again to state that discriminatory trade practices and the extraterritorial application of national laws run contrary to the need to promote dialogue and to uphold the principles and purposes set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Government of Guinea-Bissau has neither adopted any legislation against Cuba nor taken any domestic measures to implement sanctions, since such action is by nature unilateral and contrary to the norms of international law relating to freedom of trade and navigation.

Our country also regrets that this embargo, which has been in place for more than 55 years, is still causing severe economic, financial, health-related and other forms of harm to the Cuban people.

Notwithstanding signs of flexibility on the part of the United States of America regarding the normalization of relations and its policies towards Cuba, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau recognizes the importance that the Secretary-General of the United Nations attaches to the issue and calls for strict compliance with this resolution.

It also calls on the international community to continue its efforts to ensure that the two countries engage in constructive dialogue in order to establish relations.

Guyana

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

The Government of Guyana has consistently demonstrated its unwavering respect for and adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including those stated in General Assembly resolution 69/5.

To this end, Guyana has not enacted any legislation or adopted any policies or practices, the extraterritorial effects of which affect the sovereignty of other States.

Guyana has also, as a matter of principle, maintained a consistent position of firm opposition to the economic, financial and commercial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and reiterates the call for an end to this policy. Guyana encourages the process of dialogue between the United States of America and Cuba.

The Government of Guyana is in full compliance with and remains fully supportive of General Assembly resolution 69/5.

The Government of Guyana also welcomes the steps taken by the Governments of the United States and the Government of Cuba to normalize relations between their two countries and expresses the hope that this development will lead to a permanent resolution of this issue.

Haiti

[Original: French]
[21 May 2015]

The Republic of Haiti has always refrained from promulgating or applying laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 69/5.

Honduras

[Original: Spanish]
[18 May 2015]

In fulfilment of its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, the Government of Honduras has not promulgated or applied any unilateral economic and commercial laws or measures against other States that might affect the free flow of international trade.

Iceland

[Original: English]
[15 June 2015]

The Government of Iceland reaffirms its position in favour of resolution 69/5. Iceland does not promulgate or apply any laws or measures referred to in resolution 69/5. Iceland does not apply trade or economic legislation against Cuba that restricts or discourages trade or investment to or from Cuba. Iceland opposes the extraterritorial extension of unilateral measures against a third country.

India

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

India has not promulgated or applied any laws of the type referred to in the preamble to resolution 69/5 and, as such, the necessity of repealing or invalidating any such laws or measures does not arise.

India has consistently opposed any unilateral measure by countries that impinges on the sovereignty of another country. These include any attempt to extend the application of a country's laws extraterritorially to other sovereign nations.

India recalls the final documents adopted by the Sixteenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held in Tehran from 26 to 31 August 2012 on this subject, the Santa Cruz Declaration of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77, as well as other high-level decisions of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries, and urges the international community to adopt all necessary measures to protect the sovereign rights of all countries.

Indonesia

[Original: English]
[21 May 2015]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba has caused significant economic and social hardship for the people of Cuba, especially for vulnerable groups such as children, women, and older persons.

The continued imposition of an economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba violates the principles of the sovereign equality of States and of non-intervention and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States.

Indonesia welcomes the initial step in normalizing bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States. Indonesia urges States that have applied laws and measures of an extraterritorial nature that affect the sovereignty of other States, the lawful interests of their subjects or of other persons under their jurisdiction, and the freedom of trade and navigation to renounce such actions.

Indonesia continues to support resolutions on this item and reiterates the call for the immediate cessation of such an embargo.

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates that the continued promulgation of the economic, commercial and financial sanctions against Cuba, despite the annual adoption of the General Assembly resolution calling for the lifting of, and putting an end to, the embargo against Cuba by the Government of the United States, is a matter of serious disappointment.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba runs counter to the principles of international law governing relations among States and contradicts the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which calls for the promotion of solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among nations and for the resolution of differences and problems among countries through peaceful means and dialogue, on the basis of equality and mutual respect for the sovereignty of Member States.

In spite of the recent developments towards the normalization of bilateral relations between the two Governments, the embargo continues to constrain the efforts of the Cuban Government and people to eradicate poverty and hunger and to promote health and education, which are indispensable means for the achievement of economic and social development, and continues to adversely affect the living conditions and human rights of the Cuban people.

The embargo, which has lasted for decades, has seriously jeopardized the legitimate rights and interests of Cuba and other States, as well as the freedom of trade and navigation, serves no purpose other than that of inflicting tremendous hardship and suffering on the people of Cuba, especially women and children, and

therefore has to be immediately lifted, as requested by the General Assembly in all relevant resolutions.

Furthermore, since the international community faces major challenges, such as the consequences of the global financial and economic crisis as well as food crises and thus increased poverty, unemployment and malnutrition, the imposition of the embargo seems unjustifiable more than ever and deserves stronger objections at the international level. Additionally, the adoption of the General Assembly resolutions on the item for so many years and with such a wide range of support indicates the strong objection of the international community to unilateral economic coercive measures in general, and the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba in particular. It is also a sign of increasing sympathy with the Cuban Government and its people to put an end to this unlawful and inhumane embargo.

The Islamic Republic of Iran also recalls the Final Document of the Sixteenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Tehran from 26 to 31 August 2012, where the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement reiterated their call to the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba which, in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to the principle of neighbourliness, is causing huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba. They once again urged strict compliance with General Assembly resolutions. Furthermore, the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement expressed their deep concern over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo against Cuba and rejected the reinforcement of the measures adopted by the Government of the United States aimed at tightening the embargo, as well as all other recent measures carried out by the Government of the United States against the people of Cuba. They reiterated that those measures constitute a violation of Cuba's sovereignty and a massive violation of the human rights of its people.

Acknowledging that sanctions are contrary to the principles of international law, the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among States, the Islamic Republic of Iran remains opposed to the application of unilateral economic and trade measures by the United States of America against other countries, as well as to the extraterritorial application and effects of such national legislations on the sovereignty of other States.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, which has also been experiencing economic coercive measures, shares the concern of the Cuban Government and people and therefore emphasizes the urgent need to put an end to such measures and to fully implement of the content of General Assembly resolution 69/5.

Jamaica

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

The Government of Jamaica remains opposed to the unilateral application of economic and trade measures by one State against another that would obstruct the freedom of commercial activity, trade and economic cooperation.

To this end, and in keeping with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, the Government of Jamaica has not promulgated any legislation or measures that would infringe on the sovereignty of a State or its lawful national interests.

Jamaica continues to strongly oppose the unilateral and coercive economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba and the application of laws and measures aimed at extending the reach of the embargo to include third countries. The embargo against Cuba is imposing severe hardship on the well-being of the Cuban people.

The Government of Jamaica therefore reiterates its support for General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and urges all States that continue to apply such laws and measures to take the necessary steps to repeal or invalidate them as soon as possible.

In October 2014 the House of Representatives of Jamaica approved a resolution supporting the removal of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, noting that it affects the free flow of trade not only in the region but also in the hemisphere.

Jamaica welcomes the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America as an initial step towards the normalization of relations.

Japan

[Original: English]
[15 May 2015]

The Government of Japan has not promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind that are referred to in paragraph 2 of resolution 69/5.

The Government of Japan believes that the economic policy of the United States towards Cuba should be considered primarily as a bilateral issue. However, Japan shares the concern, arising from the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996 (known as the Helms-Burton Act) and the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, that, if the application of such legislation causes undue hardship in relation to the economic activities of the enterprises or nationals of a third party, the legislation is likely to run counter to international law regarding the extraterritorial application of domestic laws.

The Government of Japan has been closely following the situation in relation to the above-mentioned legislation and the surrounding circumstances, and its concern remains unchanged. Having considered the matter with the utmost care, Japan voted in favour of resolution 69/5.

As expressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Fumio Kishida, at the Japan-Cuba meeting of ministers for foreign affairs held in Havana on 2 May 2015, the Government of Japan welcomes and supports the recent developments in the relationship between Cuba and the United States of America since it contributes to regional stability and development. The Government of Japan expresses its hope for continued progress in these developments.

Jordan

[Original: English]
[27 May 2015]

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has not applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 69/5.

The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has consistently voted in favour of the resolutions on this item and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Kazakhstan

[Original: English]
[15 May 2015]

In its foreign policy, Kazakhstan is guided by the principles of international law and stands for the rights of nations to develop according to their own way of development.

Kazakhstan strongly condemns any unilateral acts that affect the sovereignty of another State.

Kazakhstan has never accepted any national regulations that infringe, impede or retard the development of foreign countries, including in their economic, commercial and financial spheres.

In this regard, Kazakhstan, like the overwhelming majority of the international community, calls for lifting the embargo against Cuba and the cessation of all acts that are contrary to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Kenya

[Original: English]
[2 June 2015]

The Government of Kenya reaffirms its objection to the unilateral coercive measures that are at variance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Kenya has never unilaterally promulgated or applied laws or measures of any kind that have extraterritorial effects affecting the sovereignty of other States.

The majority of the States Members of the United Nations and member States of other organizations have called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. Kenya believes in and upholds the principles of maintaining friendly relations, including commerce among nations for the promotion of peace and security, as indispensable ingredients for the social and economic advancement for all people.

Kenya will continue to oppose the blockade against Cuba that has negatively affected the citizens of Cuba and, in line with the position of the African Union, calls for the immediate lifting of the long-standing and unjustifiable economic and

trade embargo imposed on Cuba, so as to allow that country to enjoy all the legitimate prospects for its sustained development.

In this regard, the Government of the Republic of Kenya has always voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions calling for the lifting of the United States of America embargo imposed on Cuba.

Kiribati

[Original: English]
[30 May 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Kiribati reaffirms its support for resolution 69/5 and, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, has not taken any measures that might impair economic, commercial or financial relations between Kiribati and Cuba. The resolution addresses moral and humanitarian considerations which, when implemented, will positively contribute to improving the general welfare and well-being of the people of Cuba.

Kuwait

[Original: English]
[14 April 2015]

The State of Kuwait supports the implementation of resolution 69/5 with an emphasis on the need to comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in their internal affairs, as well as the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Furthermore, the State of Kuwait has always voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions calling for the lifting of the United States embargo imposed on Cuba.

Kyrgyzstan

[Original: Russian]
[7 May 2015]

In its foreign policy, the Kyrgyz Republic strongly follows the fundamental principles of international law, including the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and advocates respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and shipping.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

The Lao People's Democratic Republic has neither promulgated nor introduced laws and measures of the kind referred to in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of General Assembly resolution 69/5.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is of the view that an embargo with its extraterritorial implications does not only hinder the socioeconomic development of any single nation but also contradicts the principles and the purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, the sovereign equality of States, as well as the freedom of international trade and navigation. Nevertheless, the Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes the recent positive development in the efforts to normalize diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba.

This positive momentum should be further promoted and concretized by the lifting of the existing embargo imposed on Cuba. This gesture would act as a catalyst to and would reflect the genuine normalization of the relations between the two countries.

Lebanon

[Original: English]
[7 May 2015]

The Government of Lebanon fully complies with General Assembly resolution 69/5 concerning the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations and international law.

Lesotho

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

The Kingdom of Lesotho expresses its deep concern at the continuation of the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo that has been imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, which is in contravention of the principles of the multilateral trading system, international law and the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, as well as the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-intervention in internal affairs.

The Kingdom of Lesotho has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of Cuba.

Lesotho reiterates its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and multilateralism, and thus remains opposed to the economic and commercial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Liberia

[Original: English]
[6 July 2015]

For many decades, more than two thirds of the States Members of the United Nations have consistently voted in favour of lifting the economic, commercial and financial embargo unilaterally imposed on Cuba by the United States. This has

signalled the necessity of lifting the embargo and a rejection by the international community of keeping the embargo in place.

We join other countries in commending Cuba for taking the most peaceful path thus far in seeking the unconditional lifting of the blockade through the United Nations, a place where the entire international community converges to speak against impunity and uphold standards of rights and morality.

Liberia, in this connection, has continually expressed its concern at the maintenance of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba owing to its unilateral nature, affecting good and friendly relations and the economic well-being of the Cuban nation and people; abrogating the spirit and intent of the Charter of the United Nations; and undermining principles and norms that govern the peaceful coexistence of States.

The Government of Liberia, therefore, unreservedly supports the ending of the unilateral commercial and trade embargo against Cuba and will continue to collaborate with other States Members of the United Nations towards the achievement of this objective.

Liechtenstein

[Original: English]
[22 April 2015]

The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 69/5. The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein is furthermore of the view that legislation whose implementation entails measures or regulations having extraterritorial effects is inconsistent with generally recognized principles of international law.

Madagascar

[Original: French]
[20 May 2015]

Madagascar has never promulgated or applied economic, commercial or financial laws or measures against the Republic of Cuba and supports measures aimed at ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Malawi

[Original: English]
[29 April 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Malawi has never promulgated country-specific targeted legislation or instructions barring trade of cooperation with Cuba. As such, following the adoption of the resolution there is not much to be done to comply with the resolution in terms of the law.

Malaysia

[Original: English]
[4 June 2015]

Malaysia opposes all forms of unilateral economic, commercial and financial sanctions and embargoes that contravene the norms of international law and contradict the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rule-based multilateral trading system. Such unilateral economic measures may not only restrict free and unfettered business across borders but may also hamper social development, such as employment opportunities and the living conditions of the general population.

In this regard, Malaysia fully supports the efforts of the international community, as contained in General Assembly resolution 69/5 and other relevant resolutions that call for an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on any State Member of the United Nations.

Maldives

[Original: English]
[27 April 2015]

The Republic of Maldives has diplomatic relations with Cuba and does not impose any sanctions against any country without an explicit mandate from the General Assembly or the Security Council of the United Nations, or from those international organizations of which the Maldives is a member. Accordingly, the Republic of Maldives has not imposed any sanctions on Cuba nor has it enacted any laws or regulations that would contravene the provisions of General Assembly resolution 69/5 on which the Republic of Maldives voted in favour.

Mali

[Original: French]
[23 April 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Mali has always voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

The Government of the Republic of Mali, which fully supports resolution 69/5, has not promulgated any laws or applied any measures of the kind referred to in the preamble of the resolution.

As in the past, Mali maintains its position that the embargo against Cuba should be lifted.

Mauritania

[Original: French]
[13 May 2015]

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania disagrees with and is opposed to all aspects of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania remains committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of trade and navigation.

Mauritius

[Original: English]
[20 May 2015]

Mauritius reiterates it commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principle of the sovereign equality of States, and non-interventions and non-interference in their internal affairs. In line with the above principles, and in conformity with international law, Mauritius has not promulgated any law or measure aimed at imposing unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

The Republic of Mauritius enjoys excellent bilateral relations with Cuba. With regard to trade relations, although exports to Cuba have been negligible, imports from Cuba have increased over the past four years.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[18 May 2015]

Mexico reaffirms its traditional position of principle that any type of political, economic or military sanctions imposed on States may only result from a decision or recommendation made by the Security Council or General Assembly. Multilateralism continues to be the best way of settling disputes and ensuring peaceful coexistence between States.

Mexico welcomes the normalization of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States and reaffirms its commitment to promoting open dialogue on various topics, such as trade, democracy and human rights, which will enable the people of Cuba to enjoy greater development opportunities. This decision is consistent with the position Mexico has long held, namely to seek peaceful solutions to disputes and to promote peace in the Americas.

Cuba is one of the major trading partners of Mexico in the Caribbean. In 2014, their bilateral trade reached US$ 374 million; Mexican exports amounted to US$ 693.1 million; imports from Cuba amounted to US$ 24.7 million; and Mexican investment in Cuba increased to US$ 730 million.

Since 1999, the year before the signing of Economic Complementarity Agreement No. 51, trade between the two countries has increased by 58 per cent. The Third Additional Protocol to the Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2014, and the Fourth Additional Protocol to the Agreement entered into force on 4 April 2015.

The negotiations focused mainly on agro-industrial products, poultry, dairy products, canned goods, chemicals, rum, tobacco, pharmaceuticals and medical instruments and apparatus, among others.

Monaco

[Original: French]
[23 April 2015]

Pursuant to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, the Principality of Monaco has not promulgated or implemented laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 69/5.

Mongolia

[Original: English]
[7 May 2015]

The Government of Mongolia has neither promulgated nor applied any laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 69/5. Mongolia has consistently supported the aforementioned resolution.

Montenegro

[Original: English]
[10 June 2015]

The Government of Montenegro reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and has neither promulgated nor applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 69/5. The Government of Montenegro is ready to further develop cooperation with Cuba at both the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Morocco

[Original: French]
[26 May 2015]

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the cardinal principles of international law.

The Kingdom of Morocco has always encouraged the development of friendly relations between Member States of the United Nations.

Mozambique

[Original: English]
[15 April 2015]

The Republic of Mozambique has never promulgated, applied or contributed to the application of any of the laws or regulations mentioned in resolution 69/5. In this context, the Republic of Mozambique voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution and reiterated its unconditional support for its provisions, appealing to the United Nations to ensure that all Member States take the resolution into consideration.

Myanmar

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

The Government of Myanmar has consistently opposed any unilateral coercive measures directed at a State Member of the United Nations that violate the Charter of the United Nations and contradict the norms of international law.

Myanmar has always maintained that the relations of the international community should be based on mutual respect and that differences should be resolved through consultations. In this regard, Myanmar welcomes the ongoing discussions being held between the United States and Cuba to normalize relations and hopes that these discussions will also lead to the eventual lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Unilateral sanctions or embargoes are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, including international law and the principle of good neighbourliness. Since the resolution was first introduced by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, in 1992, Myanmar has taken the principled position of joining the rest of the international community in calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, which causes huge material losses and economic damage to the Cuban people. Myanmar, as a country that has experienced a similar situation for decades, fully understands from its own experience the degree of suffering caused by sanctions, which have negative impacts on the innocent people of the country.

As an advocate for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Myanmar recognizes the sovereign equality of States and therefore fully supports General Assembly resolution 69/5, calling for an immediate end to the embargo against Cuba.

Namibia

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

Namibia strongly supports General Assembly resolution 69/5 and calls for an immediate and unconditional lifting of the embargo against the Republic of Cuba, in conformity with the obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. Every year Namibia has supported, and will continue to support, the General Assembly in terms of the removal of the embargo against the people of Cuba. Namibia has not promulgated or applied any laws and measures to support such embargo.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia upholds the principle of peaceful coexistence of nations, respects the sovereign equality of States, and believes in fair and open trade among nations. Since attaining independence, Namibia has taken steps to strengthen trade relations with Cuba. Equally, Cuba continues to provide expertise to Namibia in the fields of health, agriculture, aquaculture and education.

Since the previous reporting period, the following high-level visits, among others, further cemented the excellent relations between Namibia and Cuba:

- Official visit to Cuba, by the President of the Republic of Namibia, Hifikepunye Pohamba, September 2014

- Official visit by the Vice-President of the Council of State of Cuba to Namibia, Salvador Mesa, May 2014
- Other lower-level visits and economic activities

In addition, Namibia and Cuba have signed a number of agreements, memorandums of understanding and letters of intent.

Nauru

[Original: English]
[21 May 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Nauru reaffirms its absolute commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom on international trade and navigation, which also form fundamental principles of international law.

Nauru has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between the Republic of Nauru and the Republic of Cuba. Furthermore, Nauru has consistently supported the relevant General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba.

Nepal

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

The Government of Nepal has firmly adhered to the provision of General Assembly resolution 69/5 and has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures contrary to the resolution.

New Zealand

[Original: English]
[2 June 2015]

The Government of New Zealand reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 69/5. The Government of New Zealand has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo against Cuba. New Zealand reiterates those calls and has no trade or economic legislation or measures that restrict or discourage trade or investment to or from Cuba and welcomes all steps towards normalization, including lifting the embargo.

Nicaragua

[Original: Spanish]
[11 May 2015]

Nicaragua reiterates its firm and unwavering respect for the sovereign equality of States, the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in a State's

internal affairs, and freedom of international trade and navigation, as set forth in various international instruments, as well as other principles that are essential to international coexistence and peace. Nicaragua also reiterates the right of every State to choose its own social, political and economic system free from outside interference, coercive economic measures, sanctions or embargos.

Nicaragua once again expresses its unconditional solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba and states that it has not enacted, nor will it enact, any laws affecting the economic, commercial and financial rights of the fraternal people and Government of Cuba and that it has not implemented, nor will it implement, any measures that might impose restrictions on trade or any other type of relations with Cuba.

Rather, the Government of Nicaragua has continued to broaden and strengthen its political, economic and commercial relations and its ties of complementarity, solidarity and development cooperation with the people and Government of Cuba at the bilateral level and through the various existing integration and cooperation mechanisms in the Latin American and Caribbean region, in particular the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America — Peoples' Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP), PetroCaribe and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

We have approved at the parliamentary level and put into practice a commercial agreement aimed at enhancing preferential tariffs, internal tax treatment, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, trade cooperation and cooperation on tourism-related issues to the benefit of the fraternal peoples and Governments of the Republic of Cuba and the Republic of Nicaragua. Nicaragua will continue to strengthen all of the mechanisms at its disposal at the bilateral and multilateral levels to help the Cuban people in its indefatigable struggle against the embargo.

The Government of Nicaragua welcomes the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States as a first step towards the normalization of bilateral relations. However, we reiterate our principled position that there can be no full normalization without an end to the cruel and inhumane embargo imposed on the people and Government of Cuba for over five decades, an embargo that 188 States of the international community have rejected year after year. The embargo should be lifted without conditions, much less demands aimed at changing the legal and constitutional order of Cuba.

We reiterate the position of our President Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra that the President of the United States has broad executive powers to make substantive and extensive changes to the blockade policy. We urge him once again to continue to take the necessary steps to bring an end to this obsolete policy. While welcoming the steps taken to modify some limited elements of the blockade policy, we wish to emphasize that its essential elements remain intact and must be completely dismantled.

Nicaragua reiterates its emphatic rejection and condemnation of the continuance and tightening of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba and all the extraterritorial coercive measures taken by the United States of America. These actions not only fail to contribute to the requisite climate of dialogue and cooperation which should prevail in international relations between sovereign States, but also constitute the principal obstacle to the

development of this fraternal country and its efforts to maintain its major economic and social achievements.

The response of our Cuban brothers to this cruel and devastating embargo has been one of solidarity and internationalism, the sending of more doctors and educators, more cooperation in solidarity, an increase in fair trade, in a contribution to the full development of all the peoples of the world. During the recent Ebola epidemic on the fraternal continent of Africa, Cuba and its people and Government took the lead as ever. They were the first to respond, sending the largest and most significant contingent of health workers to African soil, where they continue to fight their difficult battle.

Nicaragua, a fraternal and partner country that supports the development of the brotherly Cuban people and Government, once again expresses its gratitude for the unconditional support, cooperation and solidarity Cuba has offered in all areas; these contribute to the well-being and "good living" (*buen vivir*) of the Nicaraguan people.

The Government of Nicaragua once again calls on the Government of the United States of America to comply with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly that express the views of the international community, which demands it end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the heroic people and Government of the fraternal Republic of Cuba.

Niger

[Original: French]
[14 May 2015]

The Government of the Niger is deeply committed to respecting the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in internal affairs, and freedom of international trade and navigation, as established in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law, and has not taken any measures contrary to the provisions of this resolution.

On the contrary, the Republic of the Niger and the Republic of Cuba have maintained good cooperative relations since the signing of the general agreement on cooperation between the two countries in 1994. Since then, the scope of this cooperation and the activities covered by it have evolved and expanded. The two countries regularly hold bilateral consultations, thereby attesting to the political will of their leaders to strengthen the ties of cooperation and solidarity between them for the benefit of their peoples.

In September 2014, the President of the Republic Niger and Head of State, Mohamadou Issoufou, visited Cuba with a view to strengthening cooperation between the two States.

Furthermore, the Government of the Niger considers that each country and each people has the legitimate right to establish its own development model freely and with the same opportunities for success, in accordance with the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Government of the Niger appreciates the recent discussions between Cuba and the United States of America, which have led to a marked improvement in

relations between the two countries. The authorities of the Niger encourage the two parties to continue their discussions until the embargo is fully lifted.

Niger therefore reaffirms its support for resolution 1/(XXIII) of the African Union, dated 27 June 2014, on the topic.

For all the above reasons, the Republic of the Niger continues to support its sister republic, Cuba, in its campaign to secure the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against it by the United States.

Nigeria

[Original: English]
[27 May 2015]

The Federal Government of Nigeria maintains friendly relations with all States and does not favour unilateral measures to settle political disputes. Consequently, the Federal Government reiterates its support for ending the embargo against Cuba.

Norway

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

The Government of Norway reaffirms its position in favour of resolution 69/5. Norway does not promulgate or apply laws and measures referred to in resolution 69/5. Norway does not apply trade or economic legislation against Cuba that restricts or discourages trade or investment to or from Cuba.

Norway opposes the extraterritorial extension of unilateral measures against a third country.

Norway welcomes the positive developments in the relationship between Cuba and the Unites States and hopes this will lead to the lifting of the embargo in the near future.

Oman

[Original: English]
[18 May 2015]

The Government of Oman is not applying any laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution 69/5, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation. The Government of Oman reaffirms the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Pakistan

[Original: English]
[6 May 2015]

Pakistan is fully in observance of resolution 69/5.

Panama

[Original: Spanish]
[29 May 2015]

Panama reaffirms its commitment to free trade and transparency in international commerce and therefore firmly rejects any unilateral, coercive measures that seek to have extraterritorial effect and thus contravene international law and the commonly accepted standards of free trade set out in all multilateral trade and integration arrangements.

In our view, the imposition of economic, commercial or financial sanctions on a State is permissible only if those sanctions stem from Security Council resolutions and are in accordance with the action provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

For these reasons, Panama has historically condemned the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States of America. It has supported its sister country from Latin America both in General Assembly resolutions and in regional and international forums.

In this regard, Panama will continue to support all the efforts that are being made to put an end to the embargo against Cuba, in accordance with the Charter and international law.

Panama believes that dialogue aimed at finding additional and better points of understanding between the two countries should continue to be promoted and strengthened.

Papua New Guinea

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

The Government of Papua New Guinea remains steadfastly committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in particular to the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal sovereign affairs of other Member States.

Accordingly, Papua New Guinea continues to foster friendly, cooperative relations with Cuba and therefore has no restrictive legislative policy or other measures against Cuba.

While welcoming the thawing bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States of America, the Government of Papua New Guinea reiterates its support for General Assembly resolution 69/5, in which the General Assembly stresses the imperative to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Paraguay

[Original: Spanish]
[1 June 2015]

In conformity with the principles established in its Constitution and in the Charter of the United Nations and with the general principles of international law,

the Government of the Republic of Paraguay considers that the extraterritorial application of domestic laws infringes on the sovereignty of other States, undermines the equality of States before the law and compromises the principle of non-intervention and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Paraguay is in full compliance with resolution 69/5.

Peru

[Original: Spanish]
[2 June 2015]

Peru remains fully committed to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, particularly the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation.

Peru considers that the extraterritorial application of domestic laws, as demonstrated by the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, constitutes a unilateral act contrary to the Charter, international law and the basic principles of the multilateral trading system.

Since 1992, when Peru voted in favour of resolution 47/19, submitted by Cuba for adoption by the General Assembly, the Peruvian Government has voted in favour of all subsequent resolutions on this matter.

Peru has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or regulations that could affect the sovereignty of Cuba or its freedom of trade and navigation.

Peru believes that these coercive measures affect the economic growth of Cuba and restrict its social and human development. The Government of Peru expresses its profound concern about the adverse effects that the embargo has on the quality of life and well-being of the Cuban people, especially with regard to food supply, health and other essential services, by denying them access to private credit, food, medicine, technology and other supplies needed for the country's development.

Peru continues to promote trade and economic exchanges with Cuba and has consistently opposed the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against that country. Bilateral trade between Peru and Cuba has increased considerably in recent years, as has the number of air connections between Lima and Havana; this means that there will be not only a considerable flow of tourists from and to Cuba, but also an opportunity to further strengthen the bilateral trade relationship.

In conclusion, Peru considers that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is inconsistent with the dynamics of regional politics, as illustrated recently by the return of Cuba to dialogue and cooperation forums in the Americas, including its participation in the Seventh Summit of the Americas in April 2015.

Philippines

[Original: English]
[2 June 2015]

The Philippines maintains good relations with Cuba through economic and sociocultural cooperation in the fields of trade, science and technology, culture, sports and education.

The Philippines has not enacted legislation or measures to prohibit or restrict economic, financial and commercial relations with Cuba.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[7 May 2015]

The position of the State of Qatar regarding this resolution remains unchanged: the State of Qatar fully supports General Assembly resolution 69/5. The State of Qatar firmly supports the rules and principles of international law in its foreign policy and follows a policy of full compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Qatar therefore has not introduced or applied any laws or measures inconsistent with the resolution.

Republic of Korea

[Original: English]
[4 June 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Korea has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions to call for an end to the economic and trade embargo on Cuba since 1999. Therefore, the Republic of Korea has not applied laws and administrative measures of the kind that are referred to in resolution 69/5.

Republic of Moldova

[Original: English]
[29 April 2015]

The Republic of Moldova fully upholds the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and has never promulgated or applied laws and measures of the kind referred to in resolution 69/5.

Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[28 May 2015]

Russia confirms its position in respect of this General Assembly resolution: making concerted efforts and sharing the opinion of the overwhelming majority of members of the international community, it strongly condemns the United States embargo against Cuba and calls for its immediate repeal.

We consider that the maintenance of the commercial, economic and financial embargo against Cuba by the United States is a counterproductive and short-sighted relic of the cold war, an anachronistic policy that is unjustified by current realities and is detrimental to the Cuban economy and the sustained development of regional and international cooperation.

We welcome the decision by the United States Government to relax some aspects of the blockade regime. We expect that the logical outcome of the ongoing normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States will be the full and definitive lifting of the embargo and that the United States will make the necessary efforts to that end, including by focusing on its domestic public opinion. This would serve the interests of Cuba and the United States and would help to improve the situation on the island and the ability of Cuban citizens to enjoy their legitimate rights to a dignified life, especially in socially important areas such as health care.

Guided by the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the inadmissibility of any discriminatory measures or interference in the internal affairs of States, Russia will support the draft resolution at the seventieth session of the General Assembly calling for the repeal of the embargo.

Rwanda

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Rwanda, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 69/5, reaffirms its support for the resolution and has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble of the resolution. The Government of Rwanda stresses that there are no legal or regulatory impediments to free transit or trade between Rwanda and Cuba.

Saint Kitts and Nevis

[Original: English]
[14 May 2015]

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis holds in high regard the Charter of the United Nations and other provisions enshrined in international law that govern the relationships between States and international entities. The Federation therefore does not promulgate laws or implement any measures that restrict the free flow of international trade or that have extraterritorial effects that encroach upon the sovereignty of other States, as it considers such to be in violation of the principles of the Charter.

Saint Kitts and Nevis is grounded by the fundamental principles of the Charter and complies with its obligations under international law. Saint Kitts and Nevis believes that all States are equal and should always be treated fairly. It is in that vein that Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to call for the United States of America to rescind the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis is concerned that after protracted and repeated calls through declarations and resolutions, the embargo still remains.

In the light of the existing cooperation and cordial relations between Saint Kitts and Nevis and the Republic of Cuba, Saint Kitts and Nevis joins the international community in support of the General Assembly resolution, in which the Assembly calls for the United States of America to put an end to the embargo. Saint Kitts and Nevis reiterates its support for the lifting of this embargo, considering that it runs counter to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and given the severe humanitarian impact it is having on the Cuban people.

Saint Lucia

[Original: English]
[27 May 2015]

The Government of Saint Lucia affirms its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, in particular, to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States and peaceful co-existence among nations.

The Government of Saint Lucia reaffirms its position that discriminatory trade practices and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws do not accord with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law. Accordingly, Saint Lucia has not promulgated any law, legislation or measure, or taken any other action that would contravene the exercise of sovereignty by a Member State in its lawful interests or obstruct the freedom of commercial activity, trade or economic cooperation.

The Government of Saint Lucia acknowledges with appreciation the sustained economic, educational and technical cooperation between Cuba and Saint Lucia in furtherance of the economic and social development and sustainability of our nations.

The Government of Saint Lucia has consistently supported the relevant General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

[Original: English]
[18 May 2015]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo has been and continues to be a violation of international law. It is contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines re-emphasizes its deeply held conviction that the ongoing embargo is a flagrant, massive and systematic violation of the rights of an entire people. Moreover, the embargo against Cuba is not merely a bilateral matter between Cuba and the United States, but due to its extraterritorial nature, it violates the sovereign rights of many other States.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines believes that this blockade is not only illegal but is also morally unsustainable. As he introduced his famed essay entitled "Common sense", Thomas Paine said: "A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason."

And so it is today with respect to this blockade. Citizens across the United States are joining the international community by increasingly voicing their disapproval and calling for the lifting of the unilateral sanctions. Opposition to this inhumane policy is now almost universal in nature.

The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, therefore, enthusiastically welcomed the executive decision of 17 December 2014 by United States President Barack Obama to take significant steps towards the normalization of relations between the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba. The steps taken to date are all applauded by the Government and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; nevertheless, the economic, commercial and financial blockade remains intact.

The Cuban people have given freely of themselves and in a manner that has touched the hearts and souls of the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. No dollar amount can adequately reflect the value of their support, solidarity and partnership. Our appreciation cannot be overstated.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remains unequivocal in its call for the removal of this developmental constraint on our Caribbean neighbour.

Samoa

[Original: English]
[21 May 2015]

The Government of the Independent State of Samoa welcomes the beginning of the historic process towards the full normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States of America. It is its fervent hope that this process will ultimately lead to the lifting of the United States economic sanctions against Cuba and the restoration of all aspects of the bilateral relations, thus guaranteeing an enduring and sustainable relationship between the countries concerned.

Samoa also reaffirms its absolute commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including, in particular, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation, which also form fundamental principles of international law. Samoa has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo against Cuba and has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 69/5.

San Marino

[Original: English]
[14 May 2015]

The Republic of San Marino has always generally been against the imposition of any embargo and is therefore against the imposition of the unilateral embargo against Cuba as a means of pressure and because of the serious repercussions on the population.

Sao Tome and Principe

[Original: English]
[22 April 2015]

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe affirms the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nation, multilateralism in international relations, the fundamental principle of free trade and other international legal instruments.

The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe condemns any unilateral decision that seeks to restrict economic, commercial and financial activities, thereby impeding social and human development. The embargo has a direct impact on the Cuban people, and especially on the most vulnerable sectors of society, and is affecting Cuba's economic growth.

The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe has excellent relations of cooperation and friendship with Cuba and has always voted in favour of the resolution against the embargo. It once again renews its support for resolution 69/5.

The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe welcomes the decision taken by the United States in 2014 and encourages both the United States and Cuba to seek, in a peaceful and neighbourly spirit, solutions to improve their bilateral relations in order to strengthen peace and cooperation.

Saudi Arabia

[Original: English]
[29 April 2015]

Saudi Arabia enjoys normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has not applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Cuba.

In this context, Saudi Arabia is committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and recalls and affirms its position on General Assembly resolution 69/5.

Senegal

[Original: French]
[26 May 2015]

Senegal reaffirms its commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations. As in the past, it is in compliance with the provisions of resolution 69/5.

Serbia

[Original: English]
[30 April 2015]

The Republic of Serbia, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirming its commitment to the rules and principles of international law, fully implements resolution 69/5 and has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures or acts of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution.

The Republic of Serbia has consistently supported the aforementioned resolution in the General Assembly and voted in its favour.

The Republic of Serbia calls for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, expressing the desire of the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations.

Seychelles

[Original: English]
[19 May 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Seychelles once again fully endorses the content of General Assembly resolution 69/5.

The Government of Seychelles rejects the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, and calls upon States to refrain from promulgating and applying such laws and measures as they affect the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of entities under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

As an advocate for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Seychelles pursues a policy of full respect for international laws and the principles and purposes of the Charter, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal matters of other States.

That being said, the Government of Seychelles welcomed the announcement of the restoration of diplomatic ties between the United States of America and Cuba late in 2014. Seychelles has always been of the view that the strained relationship between the United States and Cuba has not been conducive to the sustainable development of both the people of America and Cuba, as well as the wider region as a whole.

The Government of Seychelles applauds President Barack Obama for calling for an end of the existing economic embargo, which has for so long affected the small island nation of Cuba. We are thus encouraged that such positive steps are being taken to resolve this dire situation.

We strongly believe that the lifting of the economic embargo on the Cuban economy will have a tremendous, positive humanitarian impact of the lives of the people of Cuba in the field of health care, food security and, most significantly, capacity-building and education. In this context, Seychelles urges that the recent positive development between the two countries be reinforced through the expeditious removal of the current embargo facing the Republic of Cuba.

The Government of Seychelles will continue to lend its voice to that of the international community to support this cause, which is the core of the Charter of the United Nations.

Sierra Leone

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

The Government of Sierra Leone welcomes the recent developments in the relations between Cuba and the United States of America, which started on 17 December 2014, when Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro announced that the United States and Cuba would restore full diplomatic ties for the first time in more than 50 years. The announcement followed a prisoner swap: the three still-jailed members of the Cuban Five (one had been released in 2011 and another earlier in 2014) were released in exchange for a United States intelligence asset, Rolando Sarraff Trujillo, who had been imprisoned in Havana for nearly twenty years. Alan Gross was also released that morning on humanitarian grounds.

In addition to the prisoner releases, the United States of America agreed to further ease restrictions on remittances, travel and banking; and Cuba agreed to release 53 prisoners the United States had classified as political dissidents. United States of America officials confirmed in January 2015 that all 53 had been released. Cuba's designation as a State sponsor of terrorism has been deleted.

In January, new travel and trade regulations were enacted that enable United States travellers to visit Cuba without first obtaining a government license. Airlines will be permitted to provide service to the country and travellers will be allowed to spend money there. The new rules also chip away at economic sanctions by allowing, among other things:

- Travelers to use United States credit and debit cards
- United States insurance companies to cover health, life and travel insurance for individuals living in or visiting Cuba
- Banks to facilitate authorized transactions
- United States companies to invest in some small businesses
- Shipment of building materials to private Cuban companies

On 11 April 2015, Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro shook hands at the Seventh Summit of the Americas, held in Panama, marking the first meeting between a United States of America and Cuban Head of State since the two countries severed their ties in 1961. The meeting came four months after the Presidents announced their countries would restore ties. The change in the policies of the two countries towards each other points to better prospects for Cuba's economy and bilateral relations.

Due to these developments, the Government of Sierra Leone reaffirms its support for resolution 69/5. The Government of Sierra Leone once again fully endorses the lifting of sanctions and rejects the imposition of laws and extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures.

Singapore

[Original: English]
[6 April 2015]

Singapore reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 69/5. Singapore has consistently supported resolutions calling for an end to the United States trade embargo on Cuba since 1995 and has voted in their favour.

Solomon Islands

[Original: English]
[27 April 2015]

Solomon Islands calls for the unconditional lifting of the 1962 economic and financial blockade against Cuba by the United States Government, in accordance the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. Solomon Islands further supports the initiatives of United States President Barack Obama to restore diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba. Solomon Islands hopes that the talks between Cuba and the United States of America will reach success in renewing friendship and restoring cooperation and dialogue between these two neighbouring countries.

Solomon Islands acknowledges the spirit, the resilience and the generosity of the Government and people of Cuba in educating, sheltering and clothing children from a multitude of States who are studying there, despite the imposed hardship.

Somalia

[Original: English]
[8 May 2015]

Somalia has no laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the present resolution, in conformity with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

South Africa

[Original: English]
[22 May 2015]

The South African Government welcomes the joint announcement by the President of Cuba, Raul Castro, and the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, on 17 December 2014, to renew bilateral relations. Furthermore, the removal of Cuba from the United States list of State sponsors of terrorism is applauded. The aforementioned steps should be the precursor to the immediate and full removal of the illegal, unilateral blockade against Cuba that has been in place for over five decades.

South Africa joins the international community to condemn this unilateral action and calls on the United States of America to initiate measures to immediately repeal these inhumane actions designed to illicitly punish a nation. These actions are

contrary to the principles, purposed and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, especially the principle of the sovereign equality of States and non-intervention in the domestic affairs of Member States. The severe economic and financial restrictions that stifle the economic and social development of Cuba, further exacerbating hardships and the suffering of the people of Cuba, are not acceptable.

The Republic of South Africa reiterates its unconditional support for the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 2 and 3 of General Assembly resolution 69/5 and takes this opportunity to appeal once again to the international community to redouble its efforts to promote constructive and transparent dialogue between the two countries, with a view to achieving the objectives of all the resolutions already adopted by the United Nations on the matter and to ensure the sustainable further progress of the people of Cuba.

South Sudan

[Original: English]
[6 July 2015]

The Republic of South Sudan reiterates its profound concern at the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. In line with the majority of States Members of the United Nations and African Union resolutions Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XVII), Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XIX) and Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XXI), the Republic of South Sudan calls for the lifting of the embargo endured by the Cuban people for over half a century. The Republic of South Sudan considers that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba is a unilateral act contrary to the principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of the multilateral trading system. The Republic of South Sudan considers that these coercive measures are affecting Cuba's economic growth and impeding its social and human development.

Sri Lanka

[Original: English]
[13 May 2015]

Sri Lanka does not approve of the use of unilateral economic measures against any country that are inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Sri Lanka is of the view that the implementation of such measures impedes the rule of law, the transparency of international trade and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Sri Lanka has not promulgated any laws and measures referred to in the preamble to resolution 69/5.

Sri Lanka has continuously supported the adoption of the resolutions on this item at the General Assembly and has taken the position that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba needs to end.

Sudan

[Original: English]
[19 May 2015]

Resolution 69/5 is a very important resolution, regarding which the Sudan, in its statement before the General Assembly, had expressed its full support and had called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States.

The establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Sudan and Cuba started in 1969. 2014 marked the forty-fifth anniversary of the bilateral relations between both countries. An advance step in the bilateral relations between the two countries was taken when the Ambassador of the Republic of the Sudan to Venezuela was accredited as Ambassador to Cuba in March 2014. Furthermore, the bilateral relations between the two countries have been enhanced by an exchange of visits undertaken by senior officials in both countries.

The Government of the Republic of the Sudan pursues a policy of full respect for international law and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereign equality of States, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. Consistent with its principled stand, the Sudan opposes the imposition of sanctions on developing countries owing to their devastating impact on the efforts of those countries to achieve sustainable development and because they constitute a violation to the Charter in that regard. the delegation of the Sudan participates every year in the debate of the General Assembly on the agenda item and votes along with the majority of Member States, in favour of Assembly resolutions prohibiting the imposition of such unilateral measures and sanctions. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan reaffirms that it does not promulgate or apply any laws or measures that could, by being applied outside its own national borders, affect the sovereignty of any State. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan calls for the repeal of laws that impose such measures.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Sudan opposes that economic and commercial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, which has caused great damage and suffering to Cuban people and violated the legitimate rights and interests of Cuba, being a flagrant violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and showing disregard for their lofty and noble principles.

Sudan itself continues to suffer from the unilateral economic sanctions imposed by the United States of America since November 1997. Such unilateral sanctions are in violation of the legitimate right of the Sudan and Cuba and all developing countries and their people to choose their own political, economic and social system that fully responds to their aspirations.

Since the adoption of this General Assembly resolution, the Government of the Republic of the Sudan has put the issue in front of the multilateral system in view of mobilizing support for the elimination of all forms of unilateral coercive economic measures on developing countries. The Republic of the Sudan also commends the initiative of the modernization of the social and economic model, presented by Cuba.

Suriname

[Original: English]
[28 April 2015]

The Republic of Suriname remains firmly committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to upholding the principles of international law. The Government of the Republic of Suriname has never promulgated or applied laws and measures of the kind referred to in resolution 69/5.

The Government of the Republic of Suriname is of the considered view that sovereign equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and other relevant norms governing international relations should be respected at all times.

Swaziland

[Original: English]
[27 April 2015]

The Kingdom of Swaziland supports the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in its initial step towards the normalization of bilateral relations and continues to support all efforts aimed at ending the blockade against Cuba.

The blockade against the Cuban people remains the main obstacle to the development of the country and to the national efforts to maintain its major economic and social achievements and to improve the quality of life of Cuban men, women and children.

It is therefore our fervent hope that the Cuban people will be able to rely on the support of the international community in their legitimate demand that the blockade imposed against them by the United States of America be lifted and that Cuba will enjoy all the freedoms, rights and privileges enjoyed by all sovereign nation States without any hindrance.

The Kingdom of Swaziland views the continued imposition of an economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba since 1960, and its further enforcement by the Helms-Burton Act of 1996, as a violation of the principle of the sovereign equality of States and non-intervention and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs. In addition to being unilateral and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and to the principle of good neighbourliness, the embargo has caused huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba. The blockade has not only caused incalculable suffering to the people of Cuba but also undermines the legitimate economic interests of third countries.

In line with all previous United Nations resolutions on this item, the Kingdom of Swaziland believes that constructive dialogue is necessary to foster mutual trust and understanding as well as harmony and peaceful coexistence among all nations of the world.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[27 April 2015]

The Syrian Arab Republic affirms that unilateral coercive measures in all their forms are illegal and constitute a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law, human rights and international humanitarian law. They are also in blatant contradiction of the rules and principles that govern relations between States, especially the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and the need to develop friendly relations between States and promote the stability and well-being of their peoples.

The Syrian Arab Republic rejects, as a matter of principle, the imposition by States or regional or subregional entities of any unilateral measures, whether economic, commercial or financial, for the purposes of coercing developing States politically or economically, or forcing them to take specific steps or modify their policies. Unilateral measures constitute a collective punishment of a people as a whole, undermine the United Nations system and adversely affect its powers. Moreover, they hamper international trade and the full realization of the rights provided for in human rights instruments.

The Syrian Arab Republic notes that unilateral measures, such as halting development aid for certain developing countries, breaking off economic relations with those States, imposing an economic, commercial and financial embargo on them, prohibiting financial and banking operations with them and preventing investments into and out of certain developing States, in addition to the exercise of various forms of pressure and provocation against other Governments in order to force them to adopt such unilateral measures, reduce the opportunities for the peoples of affected States to achieve sustainable development.

Moreover, those measures stir up feelings of hostility towards the West. The majority of such measures have been and continue to be imposed by Western States, especially the United States of America and certain European States, in order to weaken the Governments of States Members of the United Nations and impose their own will on them, contrary to the wishes of the peoples of the concerned States and their national and regional interests. This exacerbates tensions between States and threatens international peace and security.

The Syrian Arab Republic also affirms that the embargo that the United States of America has imposed on Cuba for more than five decades is unlawful and is inconsistent with the standards adopted by the international community for interaction between States.

The embargo has subjected Cuba to various kinds of economic, social and political harm. It has intensified the suffering of the Cuban people and affected their intensive efforts to achieve well-being and prosperity. The embargo has placed the United States of America in a position that cannot be justified under any circumstances from a legal or moral point of view, one that is politically at odds with the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates the call of the Sixteenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries (Tehran, 26 to 31 August 2012) for an end to the embargo imposed by the Government of the United States of

America against Cuba. It recalls that, at the second South Summit in 2005, the Group of 77 and China rejected unilateral coercive measures and appealed to the United States of America to bring an end to its embargo on Cuba.

In the light of its position of principle in respect of the unilateral measures taken by the United States of America and the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by that country against Cuba, and on the basis of the right of peoples to pursue all legitimate means to protect and strengthen their economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, as enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Syrian Arab Republic voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 69/5, in which the Assembly emphasized the need for compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirmed the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation. In that resolution, the Assembly reiterated its call for all States to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures of the kind imposed on Cuba and called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo that has been imposed on Cuba for more than five decades.

The General Assembly is urged to take the necessary measures, in accordance with its mandate and its relevant resolutions, to put an end to the hostile practices, policies of embargo and unilateral economic measures contrary to international law that have been adopted by certain States towards other States both near and far in geographic terms.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls for the intensification of international efforts to shed light on and bring an end to extreme, unilateral coercive measures, which are connected to the efforts of the West to hold sway over the countries of the South and their resources.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls for the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba to be eliminated in all its forms and for the unilateral measures imposed by the United States of America, the European Union and other States on a number of countries, including Syria, to be brought to an end.

The Syrian Arab Republic hopes that the international community will make its voice heard through the General Assembly and other international institutions and organizations, and that the United States of America will respect, and its institutions will fully heed, that voice.

Tajikistan

[Original: English]
[2 June 2015]

The Government of Tajikistan reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 69/5.

Tajikistan is committed to the principles of international law and supports the fundamental rights of nations to freely choose their own ways of development. Taking into account, among other principles, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade, Tajikistan believes that such economic, commercial and financial

measures against Cuba continue to adversely affect the living conditions and human rights of the Cuban people and hamper the efforts of the Government of Cuba to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Furthermore, given that the international community is facing major challenges, such as the global financial and economic crisis and the resulting increase in poverty, unemployment and malnutrition, the imposition of embargoes and sanctions will be more unjustifiable than ever and deserves appropriate reactions at the global level.

Such actions are contrary to the principles of international law, the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among States.

Tajikistan welcomes the steps undertaken by the United States of America to ease the blockade and engage further in dialogue with Cuba.

Tajikistan enjoys friendly diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba. Tajikistan will continue to undertake further measures to strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

Thailand

[Original: English]
[17 May 2015]

Since 1994, the Royal Thai Government has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade and economic embargo against Cuba.

Thailand opposes the imposition by one country of its national law on another country which, in effect, compels a third party to comply with it. Such an act would be contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The imposition of the unilateral embargo against Cuba has undermined the socioeconomic development of the country and caused the suffering of its people.

Thailand has maintained neither legal provisions nor domestic measures of such nature and continues to discourage them.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

[Original: English]
[23 June 2015]

The Republic of Macedonia fully implements resolution 69/5.

Timor-Leste

[Original: English]
[1 July 2015]

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste adheres fully to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation.

In this regard, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 69/5 and reiterates that it has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures referred to therein.

The Government of Timor-Leste is opposed to the continued adoption and application of such extraterritorial measures and supports the immediate and unconditional lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Togo

[Original: French]
[1 June 2015]

In keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Togo has always striven to promote respect for the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and for non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs. Likewise, it supports unreservedly the principle of freedom of trade and navigation, which is enshrined in numerous international legal instruments.

Consequently, Togo systematically rejects the use of any unilateral measures to exert pressure on States.

It has thus never promulgated or applied any laws or regulations aimed at curtailing the sovereignty of other States or the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction.

The Government of Togo has consistently supported the steps taken by the Cuban Government to end the embargo imposed against Cuba by the United States of America. Ending the embargo has become an urgent necessity, as it would contribute to further advances towards the restoration of diplomatic, economic and trade relations between the two countries, a goal that the Republic of Togo wholeheartedly supports.

Tonga

[Original: English]
[18 May 2015]

The Kingdom of Tonga adheres fully to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and accepted under international law, in particular, the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Thus, the Kingdom of Tonga has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 69/5. The Kingdom of Tonga maintains friendly and diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Trinidad and Tobago

[Original: English]
[3 June 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, in particular, to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Government remains steadfast in its view that discriminatory trade practices and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws do not accord with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter and in international law. Accordingly, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter and international law, Trinidad and Tobago does not apply unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against other States.

Since 1972, when diplomatic relations were established, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has maintained a multifaceted relationship with the Republic of Cuba, an important dimension of which is trade and economic in nature. Trinidad and Tobago consistently supports subregional, regional and international efforts to promote constructive dialogue to bring about the cessation, sooner rather than later, of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, which significantly challenges the achievement of sustainable human development in that country.

Trinidad and Tobago therefore welcomes, with enthusiasm, the reopening of direct and frank dialogue between Cuba and an influential and respected member of the international community. We encourage and support ongoing consultations in good faith between the parties regarding the resumption of diplomatic contacts, within the framework of the full normalization of relations, an integral part of which must be the lifting of the embargo.

In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its call for the full reintegration of Cuba into the international system.

This position is reinforced in subregional and regional bodies to which Trinidad and Tobago subscribes, such as the Caribbean Community, the Organization of American States, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Tunisia

[Original: French]
[12 May 2015]

Tunisia reaffirms its commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In that context, Tunisia supported resolution 69/5 and

all of the previous General Assembly resolutions calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed on Cuba.

Tunisia does not apply laws or unilateral measures with extraterritorial effects. It therefore has not adopted any laws or measures against Cuba prohibiting economic, commercial or financial relations between the two countries.

Turkey

[Original: English]
[6 May 2015]

The Republic of Turkey does not have any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 69/5; it expresses concern at such measures that adversely affect the living standards of people; and reaffirms its adherence to the principles of freedom of trade and navigation in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

The Government of Turkey maintains its stance that differences and problems between States should be settled through dialogue and negotiations.

Turkmenistan

[Original: Russian]
[6 July 2015]

Turkmenistan condemns the use of unilateral economic measures as a means of exerting political and economic pressure. Such measures contravene the basic principles of international law and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and other fundamental international legal instruments.

The unilateral embargo against the Republic of Cuba holds back the development of the Cuban economy and is an unacceptable obstacle to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Unilateral sanctions and other means of economic pressure are counterproductive and may lead to tension in relationships between States, in the region and in the international arena as a whole.

Accordingly, Turkmenistan calls for the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba to be lifted promptly, which would be an important step towards the further normalization of inter-State relations between Cuba and the United States of America.

The relevant United Nations agencies should take appropriate steps to prevent the use by individual States of economic sanctions and unilateral coercive measures against other independent States, including Cuba.

Tuvalu

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

The Government of Tuvalu supports and promotes the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, which calls for solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations and fair trade practices among all nations. The current embargo

against Cuba constrains the efforts of that Government and its people in pursuing and achieving their developmental and social goals and aspirations and human rights. Despite the embargo, Cuba has continued to assist Tuvalu and many other developing countries, by training medical personnel in its renowned universities. Cuba can really do much more to enhance its global outreach, without the embargo.

The Government of Tuvalu fully supports the lifting of the economic, commercial, immigration and financial embargo against Cuba in line with the unequivocal and continued request of the clear majority of States Members of the United Nations. The current positive advances in mending the relations between the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba are honourable steps in the right direction, very much appreciated by Tuvalu.

Uganda

[Original: English]
[11 May 2015]

Uganda has normal trading relations with Cuba and does not honour the embargo.

United Arab Emirates

[Original: English]
[29 April 2015]

The United Arab Emirates voted in favour of resolution 69/5 and acts in accordance with its obligations under the principles and goals of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. The United Arab Emirates also emphasizes the necessity that all States should enjoy the full freedom of trade and navigation in all international sea lanes in accordance with international law. Therefore, the United Arab Emirates does not apply any economic, commercial or financial embargo on Cuba and does not permit the application of such measures outside the context of international legitimacy.

United Republic of Tanzania

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

The United Republic of Tanzania reiterates its solidarity and support for the Government and people of Cuba in calling for the immediate end of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. The embargo continues to affect Cuba's economy, impede development and have an impact on the daily lives of Cubans.

Its termination, as called for by the General Assembly in numerous resolutions, including resolution 69/5, would open up greater opportunities for the Cuban people who, despite the protracted blockade, have continued to render valuable support and assistance to many nations, including the United Republic of Tanzania, in several fields such as health, agriculture and education. Tanzania acknowledges the positive steps undertaken by the current United States

Administration and encourages it to speed up affirmative action that would ultimately end the embargo against Cuba.

Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]
[11 May 2015]

The Uruguayan Government, in accordance with the principles of international law and those set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, has not adopted or applied any provisions affecting the sovereign equality of other States or their freedom to take sovereign decisions on matters within their jurisdiction, thus respecting the international democratic order, particularly the rule of non-intervention in the internal affairs of another State.

The Eastern Republic of Uruguay rejects any direct or indirect means of imposing unilateral sanctions for sovereign decisions taken by any State in the political, financial, commercial, cultural or any other arena.

Uruguay believes that, taking into account the London Naval Conference definition, an embargo is an order or proclamation issued by a State in time of war. It is clear that, now, nearly a decade since the end of the cold war, there is no reason to keep in place measures such as the economic and commercial embargo, which reflect a bygone historical context.

Uruguay strongly rejects any theory that supports or justifies the extraterritorial application of domestic laws, except in relation to protective jurisdiction and universal jurisdiction.

The sanctions imposed and the extraterritorial laws enacted have caused incalculable damage to the economic development of the nation subjected to the embargo, but also to all the companies that have sought to do business with Cuba.

The moral damage to the dignity and sovereignty of the Cuban people and other peoples with whom Cuba had trade relations has been compounded by the deprivation of the right to development and the cumulative loss of income as a result of these measures.

All this has had a negative impact on the ability of the island's residents, whether Cuban or foreign, to exercise fully their basic human rights to adequate food and the highest standard of living.

The Eastern Republic of Uruguay calls for dialogue and multilateral negotiation as a useful tool for achieving the understandings necessary to reverse this situation.

Vanuatu

[Original: English]
[1 July 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Vanuatu reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 69/5. Vanuatu has continuously supported resolutions calling for an end to the United States trade embargo imposed on Cuba.

Furthermore, the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu does not have any laws and regulations having extraterritorial effects because such laws or measures have an impact upon the sovereignty of other States and are thus inconsistent with international law.

The Government of Vanuatu underscores the importance of the freedom of trade and commerce to small island developing States. Not only does it have wide repercussions on their ability to develop but it also adversely affects their right to development.

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

[Original: Spanish]
[18 May 2015]

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has never applied unilateral measures with extraterritorial effects that violate the sovereign rights and political independence of other States or the human rights of their people. That position is based on our adherence to the tenets and values expressed in our Constitution; these include humanism, cooperation, solidarity among peoples and staunch pacifism guided by unconditional respect for the norms and principles of international law.

The Government of Venezuela reiterates its categorical rejection of the application of unilateral measures with extraterritorial effects because, in its opinion, they violate the norms and principles of international law, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and other international legal instruments, and because they violate the freedom of trade and navigation and the norms of the international trading system.

In addition, it reaffirms its condemnation of the application by the United States of America of the extraterritorial provisions of the Torricelli and Helms-Burton Acts, which have caused serious additional harm to the Cuban economy over the past 20 years in terms of its economic relations with third countries and with the subsidiaries of United States firms.

Venezuela has strongly supported the 23 resolutions on this subject that have been adopted by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly since 1991, as well as the declarations repudiating this type of hostile action, which undermines peaceful coexistence between nations and international legality, that have been made in other political forums.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela again calls on the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, to end the merciless economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against the fraternal people of Cuba by the United States Government. A favourable response to this international appeal would demonstrate that country's commitment to international law, as evidenced by its unconditional respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Venezuela wishes to emphasize the importance of the resumption of political relations between Cuba and the United States of America, which took place on 17 December 2014. On that day, the President of the Republic, Nicolás Maduro Moros, speaking at the Forty-Seventh Summit of Heads of State of the Members of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) in Paraná, Argentina, welcomed this

development as an "historic victory for the Cuban people" and acknowledged "President Barack Obama's act of courage". President Maduro stressed that the announcement by Havana and Washington sent a clear message that "all weapons of ideological sabotage and constant conspiracy are rusted armaments that cripple countries' prosperity".

Similarly, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, speaking at the Seventh Summit of the Americas, held in Panama on 10 and 11 April 2015, commended President Raul Castro and his counterpart, Barack Obama, for moving towards the restoration of diplomatic relations between their countries and overcoming long-standing divisions in historic ways. He added that this development is in line with the Charter of the United Nations and its goal of promoting good neighbourly relations.

On 22 December 2014, the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States adopted by acclamation a declaration in support of the announcements made by the Governments of Cuba and the United States, reflecting the deep satisfaction of the member States with the historic announcement. The declaration reiterated the commitment of the Americas to dialogue among sovereign States and expressed support for the implementation of measures conducive to the complete normalization of bilateral relations between the two countries.

Although President Obama has stated that he can use his executive power to introduce a series of measures with limited effect, Venezuela believes that he can do much more to lift the cruel embargo on Cuba and have a sizeable and meaningful impact on the clearly harmful effects of the embargo that his country has ruthlessly imposed on generations of Cubans.

The policy of confrontation that has been promoted and implemented by the United States of America for decades has affected the well-being of the Cuban people, whose human rights have been violated as a result of the implementation of these illegal measures. The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela urges the United States of America to comply strictly with General Assembly resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54/21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7, 59/11, 60/12, 61/11, 62/3, 63/7, 64/6, 65/6, 66/6, 67/4, 68/8 and 69/5.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela therefore reiterates its condemnation of the tightening of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba by the United States of America. That action in no way fosters the climate of dialogue and cooperation that must prevail in international relations among sovereign, independent States in conformity with the spirit and purpose of the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) on the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States, adopted on 24 October 1970.

According to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 69/5, the economic and financial losses caused by the embargo are great, amounting to over US$ 1 trillion.

Such punitive measures also include prohibiting United States authorities from selling health-care technologies to Cuba. Thus, the Government of the United States of America, with its policies of persistent aggression, is flagrantly violating the human rights of the Cuban people, and particularly its right to health, by blocking the sale of equipment and drugs to this fraternal Latin American country.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela endorses the repeated declarations made by, inter alia, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the twenty-fourth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and the Sixth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Association of Caribbean States in repudiation of the application of unilateral measures with extraterritorial effects, which it considers to be contrary to dialogue and cooperation as genuine expressions of inclusive and transparent multilateralism.

It also wishes to draw attention to the declaration adopted at the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Belén, Costa Rica, on 28 and 29 January 2015, in which those Heads of State and Government welcomed the historic decision of the Presidents of Cuba and the United States to re-establish diplomatic relations; reiterated their strongest rejection of the implementation of unilateral coercive measures and reaffirmed their call to the United States Government to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on this sisterly nation for more than five decades; and urged the President of the United States to use his broad executive powers to substantially modify the blockade.

Furthermore, the Heads of State and Government of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America — Peoples' Trade Agreement, who met in Caracas on 15 December 2014, "called again" on the United States to change its policy towards Cuba by "immediately ending the economic embargo"; ceasing subversive, "illegal and undercover" activities; and "suspending the absurd inclusion of Cuba on the spurious and arbitrary list of countries that sponsor terrorism".

Venezuela is convinced that the international community must continue to demand an end to the practice of applying unilateral coercive measures that seek to curtail the sovereign right of States to determine, in keeping with the right of self-determination, their own political and social model consistent with the actual situation in their respective countries and the particular requirements of their people. It considers that peoples should under no circumstances be deprived of their means of subsistence and development.

Lastly, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela renews its firm commitment to unconditional respect for the norms and principles of international law and therefore appeals again to the Government of the United States of America to comply with the 23 resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and to end the merciless and criminal economic, commercial and financial embargo which it has illegally maintained against Cuba for more than 50 years.

Viet Nam

[Original: English]
[15 May 2015]

The United States policy in respect of the blockade and embargo against Cuba over the past many decades represents a violation of international laws in general and free trade law in particular and an infringement of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, contravening the common desire of nations in the world to build sound and equal international relations, regardless of political system, and in respect for each nation's right to choose its own path of development.

The General Assembly has for many consecutive years adopted, with an overwhelming majority, resolutions demanding that the United States end its economic, trade and financial blockade and embargo policies and laws against Cuba, the most recent of which is resolution 69/5, which was adopted by 188 votes in favour.

Viet Nam reaffirms its strong support for the related General Assembly resolutions and believes that the United Nations will soon produce concrete initiatives and measures to rapidly implement the adopted resolutions in order to put an immediate end to the blockade and embargo against Cuba.

It is the view of Viet Nam that the differences between the United States and the Republic of Cuba should be solved through dialogue and negotiation, in a spirit of mutual respect, respect for each other's independence and sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

Viet Nam welcomes the statements of Cuba and the United States on restoring diplomatic ties with each other. Viet Nam believes that the statements are the beginning of the normalization of the bilateral relations, which will bring legitimate interests for the people of Cuba and the United States and will significantly contribute to regional and global peace and stability.

Once again, Viet Nam confirms its friendship, cooperation and solidarity with the Cuban people and resolves to do its utmost with other peace-, freedom- and justice-loving peoples in the world to help the Cuban people overcome the consequences of the above-mentioned immoral and illegal blockade and embargo policy.

Yemen

[Original: English]
[15 June 2015]

The Government of the Republic of Yemen reasserts its strong belief in the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law relating to national sovereignty, non-aggression, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and the settlement of disputes between States by peaceful means.

The Government of Yemen supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to create effective means of implementing resolution 69/5, which aimed at the adoption by the international community of effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral economic measures as a means of economic and political coercion against developing countries.

It should be noted that for some 35 years, the Republic of Yemen has enjoyed outstanding diplomatic relations with the fraternal Republic of Cuba at the economic, social and cultural levels. Yemen has consistently sought to develop and strengthen those relations in the joint interests of both countries and peoples. It has concluded several bilateral cooperation agreements with the fraternal Republic of Cuba at the diplomatic, economic, cultural and medical levels. As a result of those agreements, Cuban citizens have been sent to Yemen and educational missions have gone to Cuba, and there has been active cooperation in a number of areas.

Zambia

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

Zambia continues to be greatly concerned that, after 53 years of the embargo and 23 consecutive General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the unilateral coercive measures against Cuba, many sanctions remain in place. Zambia, however, welcomes the decision of 17 December 2014 by President Raul Castro of Cuba and President Barack Obama of the United States to re-establish diplomatic relations. In addition, Zambia welcomes other subsequent measures undertaken by the United States, including the 16 January 2015 decision to amend the Cuban Assets Control Regulations and the Export Administration Regulations. It further welcomes the latter's decision to undertake efforts to remove Cuba from the list of State sponsors of terrorism, as announces on 14 April 2015.

However, Zambia regrets the untold that suffering that the decades-long economic, commercial and financial embargo has caused the Cuban people. In particular, it continues to call for restoration of the right of the Cuban people to influence their own development path.

It further calls for the complete removal of all laws and regulations relating to the 1996 Helms-Burton Act, with its extraterritorial effects, which affects the sovereignty of third States, the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Zambia continues to stand by the rights of the Government and people of Cuba to continue playing their rightful role in national development and in international cooperation. It therefore looks forward to the complete restoration of Cuba's rights in keeping with all relevant United Nations resolutions.

Zimbabwe

[Original: English]
[19 May 2015]

The continuation of the economic, commercial and financial blockade of Cuba remains an issue of grave concern to the international community as the blockade continues to have deleterious effects on Cuba and the welfare of its people. The blockade also remains a major obstacle to Cuba's potential for economic development, growth and trade. Zimbabwe is of the view that the continuation of the economic blockade of Cuba is indefensible and unjustified.

Zimbabwe shares the opinion of the greater majority of the membership of the United Nations that the economic, commercial and financial blockade of Cuba constitutes a flagrant violation of the fundamental norms of international law. The blockade is also contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs. Moreover, the economic blockade against Cuba is contrary to accepted international trade regulations.

Zimbabwe also joins other Member States in rejecting the promulgation and application of national laws with extraterritorial impact and all other coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions that are targeted mainly at

developing countries seeking to reassert their sovereignty. As a victim of these ill-conceived, illegal and immoral sanctions, Zimbabwe fully understands their impact and therefore calls upon Member States to refrain from promulgating and applying such laws and measures.

Since 1992, the overwhelming majority of the international community has consistently opposed the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and at the same time demanded its unconditional lifting. While recent moves by the United States of America to re-establish diplomatic relations with Cuba are commendable, Zimbabwe fully believes that the normalization of bilateral relations between the United States of America and Cuba will not be possible unless the blockade is lifted.

Zimbabwe therefore joins the greater majority of the membership of the United Nations in calling for an immediate and unconditional lifting of the economic blockade against Cuba. This, in our opinion, is the first step that must be pursued in re-establishing cordial diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba.

Holy See

[Original: English]
[27 April 2015]

The Holy See has never drawn up or applied economic, commercial or financial laws or measures against Cuba.

State of Palestine

[Original: English]
[5 May 2015]

The State of Palestine, which continues to suffer from the devastating humanitarian, economic and developmental impact of the blockade that has been illegally and inhumanely imposed by Israel, the occupying Power, on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly on the Gaza Strip, reaffirms its principled position in support of resolution 69/5 and relevant United Nations resolutions, as well as the positions adopted by the Non-Aligned Movement and by the Group of 77 and China, in which they call for an end to the trade embargo unjustly imposed for decades against the Republic of Cuba. The State of Palestine joins the international community in calling for a swift end to this unjust embargo in order to allow for unimpeded trade and normal economic activity by the Cuban Government and people, which is so vital for sustainable development.

Furthermore, the State of Palestine, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, affirms that it has never promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 69/5.

The State of Palestine enjoys full diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba and will continue to strive to strengthen political, economic and cultural relations with the Republic of Cuba.

III. Replies received from organizations and entities of the United Nations system

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

[Original: English]
[14 April 2015]

Cuba has not signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and is therefore not a member of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. As such, Cuba is not currently a recipient of equipment and technical support related to the establishment of a national data centre that would provide it with access to the data collected by the Treaty network of seismic, infrasound, and hydroacoustic and radionuclide stations, and it does not at present take part in associated capacity-building or training programmes of the Provisional Technical Secretariat. In addition, Cuba does not host monitoring facilities under the International Monitoring System of the Treaty.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

[Original: Spanish]
[1 July 2015]

A. The economic sanctions imposed by the United States of America on Cuba: background to the laws passed by the United States of America

The United States of America imposed sanctions on Cuba two years before placing a blockade on the country in 1962. Since then, the structure of the economic sanctions has changed little in practical terms, despite the lifting of a number of restrictions during the Administrations of Jimmy Carter and Barack Obama.

It was during the Administration of President Kennedy that a total blockade was imposed on Cuba, under Executive Order 3447 and by invoking the Foreign Assistance Act and the 1917 Trading with the Enemy Act. The blockade entered into force on 7 February 1962. Moreover, in a clear violation of international humanitarian law, it also included prohibitions on food products and medicines. Months later, the Kennedy Administration expanded the scope of the blockade to encompass all products containing raw materials obtained from Cuba, which included goods manufactured in other countries. In addition, a black list was drawn up that included all vessels that had trading links with Cuba,[5] irrespective of their country of origin, which were banned from docking in any United States port. Last, the Kennedy Administration adopted a number of measures under the Cuban Assets Control Regulations that were designed to prevent Cuba from using dollars in its international trade. The Kennedy Administration also ordered the freezing of all Cuban assets in the United States and reinforced the ban on United States citizens

[5] President Carter would abolish that list in 1977, but the Reagan Administration later reactivated it.

travelling to Cuba. In July 1964, the Organization of American States (OAS) also imposed a total blockade against Cuba, although it exempted food and medicines.[6]

The Administration of President Carter eased some of the restrictions: in March 1977, it permitted United States citizens to visit Cuba, and it allowed food and medical products to be sold. It also allowed Cubans living in the United States to send financial remittances to their relatives in Cuba.

During the Reagan Administration, however, Cuba was included on the list of State sponsors of terrorism (1982); tighter controls were imposed on imports from countries that maintained trading links with the Caribbean island, among other measures; and United States citizens were banned from visiting Cuba. This Administration allowed foreign companies to export products to Cuba if less than 10 per cent of their components had been made in the United States.

During the Administration of President Bush, sanctions were expanded against Cuba and the Torricelli Act was signed (1992). Article 9 of the Act bans United States subsidiaries established in third countries from trading with Cuba. In addition, any vessel that called at a Cuban port would be denied entry to the United States for a period of 180 days from its departure from the port in question. The law also included sanctions on countries that provide assistance to Cuba. For example, if Spain were to donate $100 million to Cuba, the United States would reduce its assistance to Spain by the same amount.

On 12 March 1996, under the Administration of President Bill Clinton, the United States Congress passed the Helms-Burton Act, which consolidated all of the standards, regulations and presidential orders that had been in place since 1962. This had the effect of raising to the rank of law the entire arsenal of measures against Cuba that had been approved previously. This legislation, and several of its sections, violates international law. It also bans international financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank, from lending to Cuba, thereby violating not only the governance of these institutions but also the rules of the International Development Association and those governing international financial cooperation.

The passing of the Helms-Burton Act intended to remove from the President of the United States all of the prerogatives that had been permitted under the Foreign Assistance Act. This meant that only Congress could change the legislation on economic sanctions. Nonetheless, as will be seen later, this is not entirely the case.

During the Clinton Administration, it was decided that certain sanctions should be eased and that the categories of persons authorized to send money transfers to Cuba should be broadened. The sale of food and agricultural products to private entities in Cuba was also authorized. In 2000, Congress also passed the Trade Sanction Reform and Export Enhancement Act, which allowed food products to be sold to Cuba for humanitarian reasons. Nonetheless, the exports in question were subject to restrictions, such as full cash payments in advance in a currency other than the dollar; and the transaction had to be conducted through the bank of a third country.

During the Administration of President George W. Bush, the restrictions were tightened once again. Scientific, academic, cultural and sporting exchanges were

[6] In July 1975, the Organization of American States (OAS) decided to lift all sanctions against Cuba.

restricted considerably; and in 2004, the Treasury Department set up a panel of three administrative judges to prosecute companies and banks that engaged in commercial transactions with Cuba.

In 2006, some of the additional restrictions imposed on Cuba also impinged on the medical domain, because the United States prohibited any export of medical equipment to third countries for use in large-scale Cuban health programmes geared towards foreign patients.

During the Obama Presidency, a number of restrictions were lifted in the domain of travel and remittances to Cuba, taking effect in 2009. The measures also broadened the range of products that could be sent to Cuba, to include categories such as clothing, hygiene items and fishing gear, and also allowed United States companies to provide certain telecommunication services to Cuba. Nonetheless, in the same year, President Obama decided to extend the 1917 Trading with the Enemy Act for a further year.

Two years later, in January 2011, the Obama Administration announced additional changes aimed at easing travel and remittance restrictions. The measures: (a) expanded purposeful travel to Cuba, such as journeys related to educational and religious exchanges; (b) allowed any United States citizen to send remittances to persons other than family relatives in Cuba, and also made it easier for religious institutions to send remittances for religious activities (as well as larger annual amounts); (c) allowed all international airports to apply for the provision of licensed charter-flight services (several of these measures had already been applied by the Clinton Administration in 1999, but had been prohibited again during the Bush presidency in the period 2003-2004).

The next section will consider additional measures adopted by President Obama to ease other restrictions imposed on Cuba more than 50 years ago, following the announcement of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations on 17 December 2014.

B. Recent announcements

1. Recognition by President Barack Obama of the human damage caused by the blockade

In his 17 December 2014 speech, President Barack Obama announced the start of a process to re-establish diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba. In various parts of his speech he recognized that the blockade had not succeeded in its aims and that a change in policy towards Cuba was necessary. In particular, he said that the United States would end the outdated approach that, for decades, had failed to advance its interests, and instead it would begin to normalize relations between the two countries. Later, he also noted that after all, the 50 years had shown that isolation had not worked and that it was time for a new approach.

Last, towards the end of his speech he stressed the fact that the blockade had not only failed to isolate Cuba but had imposed a burden on the Cuban people. Moreover, he stated that it did not serve America's interests or the Cuban people to try to push Cuba toward collapse and that the United States should not allow United States sanctions to add to the burden of Cuban citizens whom it sought to help.

2. Solid initial steps by the Government of the United States

In his speech, President Barack Obama listed the steps to be taken to restoring diplomatic ties between the United States and Cuba, which, basically, centre on three points:

The first concerns the re-establishment of the United States embassy in Havana. For that purpose, high-ranking officials will visit the island to start discussions. Thus far, three meetings have been held between the Cuban and United States delegations: the first meeting was held in Havana on 21 and 22 January 2015; the second in Washington, D.C., in late February; and the third also in Washington, D.C., on 21 and 22 May. Recent official communiqués have shown evidence of solid progress towards setting up a United States embassy in Cuba.

The second point refers to Cuba's classification as a State sponsor of terrorism. On this point, at the end of the third meeting, the Cuban representatives acknowledged the decision by the President of the United States to remove Cuba from the list of State sponsors of terrorism. It should be noted that the United States Congress had 45 days to express an opinion on the presidential decision. If it disagreed, it could table a motion to try to revoke the decision. With the 45-days having expired in late May without Congress having expressed any opinion, Cuba is now officially off the list of State sponsors of terrorism. In addition, as a result of the third round of talks, the Government of the United States, in fulfilment of its international legal obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, granted a licence to a bank to resume banking services in the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., which had been suspended for several months. By the end of the third round of negotiations, both delegations agreed to continue exchanges on issues relating to the functioning of the diplomatic missions.

The third point concerns measures to increase transport, trade and the flow of information to and from Cuba. In this regard, the President of the United States came down in favour of facilitating authorized transactions between the United States and Cuba. Thus, the United States will allow its financial institutions to open accounts in Cuban financial institutions. Last, the President authorized an increase in telecommunications links between the United States and Cuba. The relevant firms will be able to sell the products that will enable Cubans to communicate with the United States and other countries.

3. Easing of a number of restrictions during the Administration of Barack Obama

Following the announcement of the re-establishment of diplomatic ties between Cuba and the United States on 17 December 2014, the United States lifted a number of restrictions on travel and remittances as from 16 January 2015. In the field of travel, the changes relate to authorization for general permits in 12 categories: (a) family visits; (b) official business of the Government of the United States, foreign Governments and certain inter-governmental organizations; (c) journalistic activities; (d) professional meetings and academic affairs; (e) educational activities; (f) religious activities; (g) clinics, workshops, athletic and other competitions; (h) support for the Cuban people; (i) humanitarian projects; (j) activities of private foundations or research or educational institutes; (k) export, import or transmission of information or informational materials; and (l) certain export transactions that can be authorized under certain existing regulations and guidelines. Previously, travellers in any or several of these categories had to request a permit from the

Treasury Department before travelling. Under the new regulations, both travel agents and airlines can offer the travel service to Cuba without having to seek a specific permit. Another change concerns the abolition of the cap on daily spending by travellers to Cuba. At present, travellers can take out of Cuba up to $400 worth of goods, although no more than $100 in tobacco and alcohol products jointly. United States citizens are still prohibited from travelling to Cuba merely for tourism purposes.

In his 17 December speech, the President of the United States announced that the three measures raised a number of restrictions on Cuba and were the steps that he could take as President to change the policy. He went on to say that the embargo that had been imposed for decades was now codified in legislation and that, as the changes unfolded, he looked forward to engaging Congress in an honest and serious debate about lifting the embargo.

This means that relations between the United States and Cuba cannot be normalized, however, because the sanctions continue to be applied to firms, persons or countries that do not comply with the provisions contained in the different policies applicable under the blockade imposed on Cuba over 50 years ago. For these reasons, for example, the ban on Cuba using the United States dollar in its international transactions remains in force; and correspondent relations between United States and Cuban banks are not allowed; Cuban exports to the United States remain banned; and the subsidiaries of United States companies established in third countries still may not trade with Cuba. In addition, sales to Cuba of agricultural products from the United States remain subject to the conditions imposed by the law under which they were allowed in 2000, which prevents United States exporters from granting credits and requires cash payment in advance, to mention just a few of the restrictions that stand in the way of normal bilateral trade.

4. President Barack Obama asks Congress to discuss the blockade: recent actions in the United States Congress aimed at lifting the blockade in some sectors of economic activity

Led by Senator Amy Klobuchar, of the State of Minnesota, initiatives have recently been put forward for consideration in Congress, which have the ultimate aim of lifting the blockade that the United States maintains on Cuba. In particular, two initiatives were tabled in February 2015: the Freedom to Export to Cuba Act;[7] and the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act.[8] The latter was sponsored by Senator Jeff Flake and co-sponsored by Senator Klobuchar.

The first of the bills aims to eliminate the legal barriers on United States citizens doing business in Cuba; promote job creation and exports; and help to raise the quality of life of Cuban citizens. In addition, it repeals recent legal restrictions that obstruct the conduct of business with Cuba, such as the original 1961 authorization establishing the blockade; subsequent laws enforcing the application of the blockade; and other restrictive statutes that prohibit transactions between businesses controlled by or originating in the United States and Cuba, as well as restrictions on direct transport between Cuban and United States ports. This law

[7] The full text of the bill is available from https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/491/text.

[8] The full text of the bill is available from https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/s299/text.

does not repeal provisions on human rights or those related to property claims against the Government of Cuba.

The second bill would prevent the President from banning or regulating travel to or from Cuba by United States citizens or legal residents, or any of the transactions related to the journey, including banking transactions. It also provides that the prohibitions or requirements of this law shall not apply in the event of war between the United States and Cuba; or if there are armed hostilities under way between the two countries; or if there is an imminent damage to the physical or psychiatric health of United States travellers.

C. Steps taken by the Government of Cuba to bring its economic model up to date

Since February 2008, when Raul Castro officially took office as President of Cuba,[9] the sequence of changes and reforms, some more significant than others, has gathered pace, and it is starting to give a modern face to Cuba's economy and society. Although administrative-institutional changes were implemented from 2007 onward, such as the reorganization of State entities, business upgrading and measures to combat corruption, incipient changes were also made to boost the agriculture sector. The reforms have gained stronger momentum since 2008, and were given further impetus in April 2011 by the approval of the Guidelines of the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and Revolution, which constitute the road map for the process of bringing the Cuban economic model up to date.

Broader scope and more significant reforms were approved and entered into force in 2013, such as the new tax law; the authorization of non-agricultural cooperatives;[10] and the new marketing policy in the agriculture sector. Mention should also be made of the announcement of monetary unification, which represents a first step towards exchange-rate unification. Moreover, in late 2013 the National Assembly approved the New Labour Code, which, among other things, aims to prevent the exploitation of the labour force and the violation of workers' rights. In September, an important decree law was announced, establishing rules and regulations for the functioning of the Mariel special development zone, located some 50 km to the west of Havana, which is expected to be a major pole of attraction for foreign direct investment (FDI).

In the first four months of 2014, the new Foreign Investment Act was approved (replacing its 1995 predecessor), in response to the need for direct investments of between $2 billion and $2.5 billion per year to promote the development of the Cuban economy, as reported by the Minister of Foreign Trade and Investment. A total of 11 prioritized sectors have been identified for attracting foreign capital: agribusiness, industries in general, renewable energy, tourism, oil and mining, construction, and the pharmaceutical and biotechnological industry.

[9] Raúl Castro assumed the presidency of Cuba on an interim basis on 31 July 2006, when his older brother, who had been President of the largest of the Antilles until then, became ill.

[10] In April 2014, Cuba authorized the formation of the first 498 cooperatives, of which 214 had been set up by May 2015, as reported in the most recent meeting of the Council of Ministers. Currently, non-agricultural cooperatives can be found everywhere in the country and are involved in activities such as transport, construction, raw materials extraction, agricultural markets, technical and household services, restaurants and manufacturing.

among others, involving 246 investment opportunities. All this information was published in an opportunities portfolio, which is to be updated annually. In addition, a new more attractive legal regime has been put in place, offering substantial tax incentives and guarantees to investors.

The economic plan for 2014 also established that State-owned enterprises would be given greater freedom to act. Accordingly, in April 2014, amendments and additions were announced to the regulation for implementing and consolidating the State enterprise direction and management system (the previous one dated from 2007) and to adapt it to the new Cuban economic model. This aimed to expand the autonomy of the firms in question.

One of the amendments concerned the approval of the business plan. This was previously a responsibility of the line minister or the president of the Provincial Administration Council, and now is within the brief of the president of the Superior Business Management Organization. The plan also allows State-owned enterprises to freely set prices for their surplus production, once they have fulfilled the State production quota. Accordingly, new guidelines are set for firm reserves and the distribution of after-tax profits. State-owned firms will be able to retain up to 50 per cent of their after-tax profits at the end of the year, which is 20 per cent more than had been previously allowed. In addition, the option of distributing profits among the workers as an incentive to economic efficiency was generalized for all firms, provided they had undergone a financial audit with satisfactory results in the previous 18 months, and fulfilled management and productivity indicators.

Firm reserves will be used to increase working capital and finance investments and research, development and training tasks, as well as to repay bank loans. Similarly, a compensation fund can be created to cover financial imbalances in the Superior Business Management Organization and to accumulate other reserves for that organization's specific use. In the case of workers in budgeted units, it was established that the wage would be based on time worked.

The agriculture sector has received special attention in the updating of the Cuban economic model for two reasons: food security and its role in import substitution. In other words, the saving of foreign exchange since food products currently represent about 20 per cent of total imports. Accordingly, 37 (12 per cent) of the total number of guidelines correspond to this sector.

Since 2007, the Government under Raúl Castro has taken measures to boost production in this sector, including (a) an increase in the price paid to the producers of different crops; (b) the granting of land on a beneficial-use basis (thus far over 1,580,000 ha have been made available); (c) the supply of agricultural loans at preferential interest rates; and (d) expansion of the areas to be received in beneficial use and authorization to build housing. During this year, further measures are expected in the sector, as mentioned in the economic and social policy guidelines since this is one of the fulcrums of the economy. Suffice it to note that agriculture employs around 1 million workers (20 per cent of the total labour force), and that 127 of the country's 169 municipalities are agricultural. In this regard, the deregulated sale of inputs has now begun in the special municipality of Isla de la Juventud, and there is a plan to set up a wholesale input store in each municipality. In the short run, the Government plans to strengthen the input market for farmers. Despite these measures, the sector must continue the process of change in areas such as technological progress, the functioning of retail markets and value chains.

Initially, the boost given to non-State economic activity by the Government of Cuba came through authorization for own-account work. In October 2010, authorization was given and regulations were issued for engaging in 178 activities on a self-employed basis. Five months after the approval of the Guidelines of the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and Revolution, changes were published in the regulations on own-account work, including raising the number of activities that could be undertaken from 178 to 181 (the additional activities concern granite workers, insurance brokers, and organizers of integrated party services). Authorization was also given for hiring workers in all jobs (previously, only family workers could be hired, except in 83 activities); and the minimum monthly tax quota for home rental was reduced. In addition, the number of seats that could be installed in traditional family-run restaurants, known in Cuba as *paladares* was increased by 30 to 50.[11] When account is also taken of individuals working in non-agricultural cooperatives and independent family farmers, by the end of December 2014, a total of 478,951 workers came under that labour regime. By April 2015, the number of own-account workers had risen to 499,452. As a result of these developments, 28 per cent of all workers in Cuba are now in the non-State sector of the economy.

On 26 September 2013, new own-account activities were authorized (raising the number to 201), including real estate agents (for home swaps and purchases/sales), measurement instrument repairers, wholesale and retail vendors of agricultural products, and postal and telecommunications agents. In addition, the renewal of eight activities that had been suspended owing to a lack of raw materials was announced.

The Government of Cuba has made major efforts to restructure its external debt. In 2014, Cuba continued to look for a realistic solution for its external obligations to its creditors, and it managed to restructure its short-term debt with the Netherlands insurer Atradius, some Japanese companies and other trade creditors. This was a continuation of restructuring efforts in previous years involving cross-obligations with the Russian Federation, official short-term secured debt with Japan and private entrepreneurs, as well as with Mexico (which pardoned a substantial portion) and China (Cuba's second-ranking trading partner and largest source of funding). Cuba returned to the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) as it successfully renegotiated its debt with the institution. Negotiations for an agreement on short-term secured debt with other European insurers are nearing completion.

D. Impacts of the embargo

1. Calculation by the Government of Cuba of the cost of the blockade

According to the most recent reports on Cuba, that are presented annually to the General Assembly of the United Nations, the blockade has caused damage and losses valued at over $116.88 billion at current prices in 2014, since it was imposed by the United States in the 1960s. In relation to Cuba's gross domestic product (GDP), this figure would be equivalent to 141.6 per of the total value of goods and

[11] This number includes individuals working in any of the thousands of restaurant, commerce and service units that were previously operated by the State and are now run by non-agricultural cooperatives or individuals.

services produced in Cuba in that year. The report also states that if the depreciation of the dollar against the gold price on the international market is taken into account, the damage caused by the blockade in the different sectors in Cuba amounts to US$ 1.113 trillion, equivalent to 1.348 per cent of Cuba's total production of goods and services in 2014.

2. Recent examples of sanctions in different spheres in Cuba

- In March 2015, the Government of the United States imposed a fine of $1.71 billion on Commerzbank AG , the second largest bank in Germany and considered the fifth largest in the world, for violating sanctions on transactions with Cuba, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and the Sudan, and with other countries sanctioned by the United States. As a result of the halting of operations with Cuba, 50,000 pound sterling and 50,000 Swiss francs were frozen in the bank, making it impossible to convert them to euros or make payments from them. The laws of the blockade have made it impossible for Commerzbank to find a way to transfer the funds to other accounts in European banks, given the latter's refusal to engage in operations relating to Cuba. The situation has affected Cuba by preventing it from using an external payment capacity over the past nine months.

- In June 2014, the United States authorities imposed a record fine of $8.9 billion on the French bank BNP Paribas for having violated United States trade sanctions and having engaged in transactions with Cuba, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and the Sudan. As a result, a Cuban entity holds $1 million in funds frozen in BNP Paribas, and the account cannot be closed until the funds in question have been returned.

- In the same year, the United States company PayPal agreed to pay a $7.7 million fine for violations of regulations against Cuba, Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Sudan and other sanction programmes.

- The Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., went for over a year without a bank to enable it to function normally and provide full consular services, which affected the Cuban community in the United States and undermined the service provided by the office in question. This situation has now been resolved.

- Several banks of an Asian country refused to process 181 credit card transactions issued by a Cuban bank, amounting to $55 million, on the grounds that Cuba was on the list of State sponsors of terrorism drawn up by the United States. Although some of the banks later accepted the documents they had previously rejected, and in other cases different institutions agreed to process them, this significantly delayed the receipt of merchandise by Cuban firms.

- A Cuban bank received notifications from 51 foreign banking institutions (14 foreign banks and 37 branches of those banks) cancelling the relationship management application agreement for the authentication of Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) messages, without having received prior notice.

Table 1 shows the amounts of funds blocked by the United States in respect of countries included on its list of State sponsors of terrorism. In the case of Cuba, which had been on the list since 1982, the amount blocked in 2014 was $270.3 million, more than in 2013.

Table 1
Funds blocked in relation to State sponsors of terrorism in the United States
(Millions of United States dollars)

Country	*2014*	*2013*
Cuba	270.3	257.8
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1 973.5	1 950.7
Sudan	27.9[a]	30.1
Syrian Arab Republic	78.3	77.6
Total	**2 350.0**	**2 316.2**

Source: Office of Foreign Assets Control.

[a] The reduction in the amount of funds related to the Sudan in 2014 mainly reflects the licensing activity that authorizes the release of assets if it is found that the activity involved the detection of homonymous names on the list of specially designated nationals.

3. Understanding the impacts: towards a typology of losses and damage

Trade, investment, tourism (external sector)

The blockade represents a formidable barrier to trade, FDI and the development of Cuba's financial sector. The losses caused by the impossibility of exporting goods and services to the United States — its natural geographic market — and the additional costs incurred by Cuban firms by having to redirect imports and exports towards more distant and less dynamic markets, are onerous.

Cuba's island nature and the size of its domestic market make foreign trade, access to capital and FDI extremely important. Yet each of these items, which serve as development pillars for any country are profoundly affected by the blockade. For example, the blockade raises trade financing costs by increasing country risk. It makes Cuba less attractive for foreign investors, because unlike other countries in the region, such as Costa Rica and Mexico, the island cannot serve as a platform for exporting goods and services to the huge United States market. The blockade has hindered the structural transformation of the Cuban economy, impeding the development of manufactures that are sensitive to transport costs and "just-in-time" delivery, and hampering the diversification of its export basket into sectors that require new technologies. In addition, foreign investors cannot obtain financing from United States banks to develop projects in Cuba.

The extraterritorial application of United States laws has also hindered tourism development in Cuba, by imposing additional costs on tourism operators from third countries. An example of this is the additional 2.2 per cent charged to Canadian operators for processing credit-card payments for charges made in Cuba. The blockade has also prevented Cuba from benefiting from cruise ship or yachting tourism, which has been surging throughout the rest of the Caribbean.

The ban on international merchant shipping vessels entering United States ports, if they have called at a port in Cuba, forces Cuban freight forwarders to trans-ship merchandise in third-country ports, thereby incurring large additional freight and insurance charges. This raises the cost of all imports and exports, and undermines the country's competitiveness. The situation also makes it necessary to

hold large inventories of imported goods, entailing higher financial costs for all traded goods.

Furthermore, the blockade hampers the transfer of state-of-the-art technologies and hinders Cuba's industrialization. The iron and steel industry, for example, which is so necessary for the production of capital goods and the transformation of the Cuban economy according to its new guidelines, still faces constant obstacles in terms of securing imported inputs. The construction sector has been prevented from accessing more efficient building technologies, at a time when the reforms have increased the availability of credit for construction on the island. Air transport and transport generally are also severely affected by the impossibility of importing hardware or software and control systems containing United States components, and when the demand for transport services in the country is growing vigorously.

The telecommunications sector also shows signs of the damage caused by the blockade. Apart from violations of Cuban radio space, the sending of spam, and computer hacking on the island; the ban on access to telecommunications technology and software has obstructed the sector's development and shifted the economic structure away from sectors that could take advantage of Cuba's large investment in higher education.

Finance (financial system)

One of the most detrimental features of the blockade is the persecution of financial transactions. All development literature stresses the central role played by financial development in economic progress.

As a result of the blockade, Cuban bank accounts are frequently closed by foreign financial institutions and banks; and the country incurs bank intermediation expenses. Additionally, the impossibility of using the United States dollar as a payment currency imposes exchange-rate risks and costs.

The main difficulties that have affected the operations of Cuban banks are as follows:

- Exchange-rate risk is increased, owing to the continued impossibility of using the United States dollar as a currency for payment and charging in the case of Cuban exports.
- Closure of accounts in foreign banks, which implies the elimination of correspondent relations (foreign financial entities have turned down requests to set up correspondent relations with Cuban banks).
- Cancellation of relationship management application keys for SWIFT messaging, crucial for the financial sector.
- A large number of foreign banks have refused to confirm and/or report credit-card operations in Cuba.
- Cuban entities have to obtain external financing under extremely burdensome conditions as a result of country risk. In April 2014, the risk-rating agency Moody's Investor Service downgraded Cuba's rating from Caa1 to Caa2, with a stable outlook. This is the first time that Moody's has changed Cuba's rating since it was first rated in April 1999.

– The impossibility of using the dollar has compounded operational difficulties in handling notes and travellers cheques denominated in dollars and in other currencies, issued by branches of American Express in other countries. It has been impossible to find a satisfactory solution to these difficulties, even after the announcements of 17 December last year, which has entailed an opportunity cost by being unable to credit the amounts in question in Cuban bank accounts abroad. This situation could end the acceptance of travellers cheques in Cuba, with a consequent impact on visitors who carry them.

Entitlement to health, education, sports and culture

Entitlement to health

Cuba's Ministry of Public Health has argued that the blockade- affects the health sector basically through losses caused by the geographical relocation of trade and impacts on production and services. In particular, losses are caused in the following ways:

– Lack of access to state-of-the-art technologies and other inputs for solving health problems means that the Government of Cuba must send numerous patients to other countries for treatment, which it subsidizes. If the treatment in question could be provided in Cuba it would minimize the discomfort and risk to the patient and reduce the costs of procedures.

– The impossibility of obtaining parts and spares, or restrictions on bringing them into the country from other distant markets, mainly affects the sustainability of medical equipment and the associated health-care procedures, thereby undermining overall health-sector output. In addition, in several cases the technologies are exclusive to United States firms, and the corresponding spare parts are marketed by monopoly enterprises or subsidiaries, which do not allow sales to Cuba. This situation renders equipment wholly or partially non-operational, and undermines the quantity and quality of health services.

– Where suppliers do succeed, broken parts must be returned before new ones are sent, so it is not possible to store spare parts that are consumed during the course of the year. This affects delivery times and keeps equipment out of service for lengthy periods, generating costs from under-use, as well as impacting on patients. From the financial standpoint, this also pushes up prices owing to higher freight costs, and ineligibility for discounts since purchases are made on an individual basis.

– Cuba's scientists, specialists and other health professionals do not have access to events, scientific exchanges, and other activities of this type in the United States.

Entitlement to education

The blockade policy applied by the United States Government has sometimes caused insurmountable difficulties for Cuba with regard to its collaboration with other countries in education-related activities in order to gain access to technology, knowledge and the school media systems required to raise the quality of the Cuban education system.

The main problems arise in the following areas:

- Access to raw materials, inputs and new technology in the form of machines, tools, instruments, and utensils needed for teaching.

- Access to the information technology tools needed for the production of educational multimedia or for consulting bibliographical references such as those provided by Cisco Systems, Google, Symantec, SunMicrosystems, NetBeans, Oracle, ProCite, EndNote, Reference Manager and RefViz. The licences needed to access these tools involve fees payable to United States companies, which is prohibited by the regulations enforced by the blockade.

- On numerous occasions, the blockade has obstructed academic exchanges, particularly by denying travel permits to United States researchers.

- It is impossible for Cuba to receive computer equipment manufactured in the United States, even as a grant. United States information technology companies can sponsor information technology events in other countries, but are banned from doing so in Cuba.

Sports and culture

The blockade remains a major obstacle to the promotion, dissemination and commercialization of Cuban cultural and sports talent. It also depresses the selling price of the country's cultural output to very low levels. One of the main reasons stems from the market control exerted by large transnational art and music enterprises, which either are of United States origin or have a major presence in that country. Those large firms dominate the promotion and exhibition circuits of artists internationally.

Live concerts by Cuban musicians in the United States, for example, have to take the form of cultural exchanges, without the sort of commercial contract between the parties used in the rest of the world, thereby preventing performers from receiving economic benefits from the event.

The Cuban cinematographic industry has had its potential exports to the United States impaired by the impossibility of attending the American Film Market of Los Angeles. This international market, without doubt one of the world's most important and indisputably the window to the cinematographic market in United States, is closed to the International Sales Organization of the Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry.

Participation by Cuban students and teachers in different events, such as competitions, festivals, workshops and other activities in the United States, is also very limited in all disciplines: theatre, dance, ballet, plastic arts and music. In this area, the Government of the United States prohibits cultural agreements between equivalent teaching institutions of the two countries, which would facilitate the cultural and artistic development of Cuban students.

Cuban sport, recognized in the rest of the world for its major presence in numerous events in all categories, also faces many obstacles to its development and consolidation.

The blockade policy continues to obstruct direct and normal relations with different international sporting institutions and participation by athletes at major competitions held in the United States or in Cuba. The extraterritorial dimension of

blockade-related measures thus raises the cost of access to external financing and hampers the acquisition of sports equipment.

In some cases, Cuban sports teams have had to do without high-level sporting equipment, produced mainly by United States firms; or, at best, they have had to purchase it from distant markets at much higher prices.

Other issues: extraterritoriality

The sanctions against Cuba are applied on an extraterritorial basis, affecting citizens and companies from third countries. The extraterritorial measures applied by the United States against Cuba include the ban on using the dollar as a currency for international transactions. For example, the Swiss bank UBS was fined $100 million for having accepted remittances from Cuba in dollars. The Netherlands Caribbean Bank (NCB), a subsidiary of the Dutch ING group, was blacklisted by the Administration owing to its commercial relations with Cuba; and it is currently banned from engaging in commercial operations with any United States company or citizen.

In December 2004, under title IV of the Helms-Burton Act, the Government of the United States denied entry into its territory to several national leaders of the Canadian multinational firm Sherritt, along with their family members, owing to the investments held by that company in the Cuban nickel sector. Moreover, since 30 September 2004, and in the strict application of the rules established by the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, a Japanese motor company wishing to sell automobiles in the United States market first had to prove to the Treasury Department that its automobiles did not contain a single gram of Cuban nickel.

Another of the best-known instances of the extraterritorial application of the sanctions was the expulsion on 3 February 2006 of 16 Cuban citizens who were members of a delegation from the Maria Isabel Sheraton Hotel in Mexico City. This was a violation of Mexican law, which prohibits any type of discrimination on the grounds of race or origin. The episode occurred when the United States Treasury Department invoked both the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996, thereby obliging the manager of the multinational Starwoods Hotels and Resorts Worldwide to order the Cuban nationals to be evicted. It should be noted that under United States laws no Cuban citizen can benefit from the products or services of a United States firm or one with United States interests.

One further example is the sanction applied to the multinational telecommunications company Ericsson, which had to pay a fine of $1.75 million for having repaired Cuban equipment valued at $320,000 in the United States through its Panama subsidiary. The firm also had to dismiss three employees who participated in the repair of the equipment.

The legacy of the blockade will persist long after it has been lifted

It is now 53 years since the United States imposed its blockade against Cuba. The damage and impacts on the Caribbean island, as described above, are numerous and have stunted development in the different sectors of the Cuban economy, to such an extent that the lifting of the blockade alone is unlikely to produce a transformation. The effects of the absence of technology (in a broad sense) have been felt in Cuba across the board and have distorted its entire economic structure.

The productivity lag in sectors such as agriculture and industry is clear. Lack of technology and markets has restricted the country's competitiveness and position in trade and investment flows. Paradoxically, a very important cluster has arisen in the internationally recognized biopharmaceutical sector, which stems from a State vision that targets much of its production forces on specialization. However, major obstacles remain to be overcome after the end of the blockade.

The blockade has made the evolution of Cuba's production structure a slow process; and it has obstructed the shift towards higher value added sectors with export potential. The isolation policy applied by the United States against the Caribbean island has prevented it from trading with what would be its natural market: the United States itself. In addition, the extraterritorial nature of the blockade has, for several decades, made it difficult to conclude important commercial agreements with other countries, because the sanctions imposed by the United States function as significant deterrents, in our opinion. The perverse structural adaptations induced by the long-standing blockade will take decades to undo. Cuba's inclusion on the list of State sponsors of terrorism since 1982 (from which it was removed in June 2015) prevented it from receiving development finance from major multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, IMF or the Inter-American Development Bank. This, compounded by the explicit ban of the blockade on projects in Cuba being financed through United States institutions or those with United States interests, clearly restricted development assistance in Cuba.

For the reasons described above, it is hard to imagine that the economic damage caused by the imposition of a blockade over a 53-year period, will automatically be healed by its removal; the process of recovery and adaptation to the new conditions will not be easy. Nonetheless, Cuba has an organized and educated population, with the tools needed to cope with change; so perhaps the transition to a new context might be smoother, but not necessarily an overnight process.

E. Massive international support: the third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and voting record[12] in the United Nations in favour of lifting the blockade

At the third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), held in Costa Rica in late January 2015, leader issued the Belén Declaration, a unanimous statement in which they demanded that the United States end the blockade that it had maintained against Cuba for over 50 years. They welcomed the historic decision of the Presidents of Cuba and the United States to re-establish diplomatic relations. They reiterated their strongest rejection of the implementation of unilateral coercive measures and reaffirmed their call upon the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on the sisterly nation of Cuba for more than five decades. They urged the President of the United States that, in this way, to use their broad executive powers to substantially modify the blockade.

[12] A review of the application of sanctions owing to the extraterritorial nature of the blockade is contained in the annual reports that Cuba submits to the United Nations: http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/.

Every year since 1992, the General Assembly has passed resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. In the most recent vote, on resolution 68/8 in 2014 (the twenty-third time such a resolution has been brought before the Assembly), a total of 188 countries — the vast majority — voted in favour of ending the blockade. Only the United States and Israel voted against it (see table 2).

Table 2

General Assembly resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba: voting record, 1992-2014

Year	*In favour*	*Against*	*Abstentions*	*Countries voting against*
2014	188	2	3	United States and Israel
2013	188	2	3	United States and Israel
2012	188	3	2	United States, Israel and Palau
2011	186	2	3	United States and Israel
2010	187	2	3	United States and Israel
2009	187	3	2	United States, Israel and Palau
2008	185	3	2	United States, Israel and Palau
2007	184	4	1	United States, Israel, Palau and the Marshall Islands
2006	183	4	1	United States, Israel, Palau and the Marshall Islands
2005	182	4	1	United States, Israel, Palau and the Marshall Islands
2004	179	4	7	United States, Israel, Palau and the Marshall Islands
2003	179	3	2	United States, Israel and the Marshall Islands
2002	173	3	4	United States, Israel and the Marshall Islands
2001	167	3	3	United States, Israel and the Marshall Islands
2000	167	3	4	United States, Israel and the Marshall Islands
1999	155	2	8	United States and Israel
1998	157	2	12	United States and Israel
1997	143	3	17	United States, Israel and Uzbekistan
1996	137	3	25	United States, Israel and Uzbekistan
1995	117	3	38	United States, Israel and Uzbekistan
1994	101	2	48	United States and Israel
1993	88	4	57	United States, Israel, Albania and Uruguay
1992	59	3	71	United States, Israel and Romania

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba.

1. Cuba's presence in the international arena

Cuba in international organizations and regional associations

Cuba maintains two permanent missions to the United Nations (New York and Geneva) and one to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Paris). It maintains an intensive cooperation agenda with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

In addition, seven international organizations have representation on the Caribbean island: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); World Food Programme (WFP); Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which serves as a regional office for culture; World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO); and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Cuba belongs to the following United Nations organizations, bodies and specialized agencies:

Founding member of United Nations Organization (UNO)

Founding member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Member of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons since 1997

Member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) since 1966

Member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) since 1949

Founding member of the International Labour Organization (ILO)

Admission to the International Hydrographic Organization in 1950

Admission to International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO/INTERPOL) in 1952

Member of the WHO since 1950

Member of the PAHO since 1925

Member of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) since 1918

Member of UNESCO since 1947

Member of FAO since 1945

Member of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) since 1975

Member of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) since 1975

Founding member of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Admission to the Conference on Disarmament in 1979

Founding member of the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Permanent Court of Arbitration

International Air Transport Association (IATA)

Cuba is also a member of the following regional associations:

Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)

Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA)

Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

Latin American Integration Association (LAIA)

Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)

Cuba's cooperation abroad on health issues

According to 2014 data from the Minister of Public Health of Cuba, the Caribbean island has collaborated in training medical science professionals for 121 countries in Asia, Africa and the Americas. It has also graduated 38,940 medical doctors. Worldwide, Cuba has 50,731 aid workers operating in 66 countries, of whom 25,412 are doctors.

In July 2004, it launched the Operation Miracle programme, which has received collaboration from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Cuba has cooperated with 35 countries; and 2.89 million patients have benefited from the programme, 36,636 of them from Africa.

Cuba also provided substantial assistance in combating the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. It sent over 200 doctors under WHO coordination to the affected countries (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone). The Minister of Health of Cuba pointed out that Cuban doctors have worked in conjunction with teams from the United States, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the countries of the African Union, among others, to cope with the outbreak.

Economic note on Cuba

Recent trends

Cuba's GDP grew by 1.3 per cent in 2014 (compared with 2.7 per cent in 2013). While the agriculture sector and the sugar industry, along with business services, real estate and rental activities, continued to do well; although activity in the manufacturing industry and construction, as well as mining and quarrying, declined. Nickel production declined, owing partly to maintenance work on the Che Guevara plant. The sugar industry grew less than the Government had planned because of low yields, poor weather and logistical issues. The GDP growth slowdown also reflected a sharp reduction in investment growth compared to the rates achieved in the three preceding years. Positive factors included the growth of tourism income on the order of 5.3 per cent, and relatively strong non-State activity.

GDP growth of 4 per cent is forecast in 2015 (similar to the rate achieved in 2008 and the highest of the past five years), mainly on the back of an increase of more than 20 per cent in domestic investment. New regulations putting an end to the obstacles to fulfil enterprise investment plans were put in place in January 2015.

The 4 per cent growth forecast is based on an increase in tourism earnings (in the first quarter of the year, tourist arrivals were up by 14.4 per cent), and higher

levels of production in many economic sectors, fuelled by greater access to external financing (which in turn stems from successful debt renegotiation agreements).

On the fiscal front, the Government is projecting a deficit of 6.2 per cent of GDP, compared with 4.1 per cent in 2014, with public expenditure rising by 10 per cent and income up by 6 per cent. Expenses include the item "Financing for export and import substitution", which basically represents an incentive to increase production for that purpose. If the item is deducted from total expenditure, the 2014 fiscal deficit becomes a surplus of 6.1 per cent, and the 2015 deficit becomes a surplus of 4.3 per cent.

The announcement of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States, and the removal of Cuba from the list of State sponsors of terrorism prepared by the United States Department of State, constitute positive but insufficient steps towards normalizing relations between the two countries. It is important to note that the United States economic, trade and financial blockade against Cuba remains in force and continues to hinder trading activities in accordance with international trade rules.

Economic policy

Fiscal policy

The State budget for 2014 was based on estimates of GDP growth of 2.2 per cent and a fiscal deficit of 4.7 per cent of GDP, with 70 per cent funded by secondary issues and 30 per cent funded by primary issues (both in 2.5 per cent 20-year bonds) purchased by commercial banks and the central bank, respectively. Cuba's economy, however, only grew at 1.3 per cent in 2014, and the estimated fiscal deficit for 2014 only reached 4.1 per cent of GDP probably because of adjustments on the investment or expenditure side.

Budget priorities for 2014 included supporting agricultural activity (including the sugar sector) and an increase in spending earmarked for budgeted activity. Subsidies to ensure local availability of food (including rice, beans, pork, milk and sugar) increased by 44.6 per cent between 2013 and 2014. Expenditure on budgeted units (losses from public enterprises are not included in the regular budget) grew by 5 per cent compared with the amount spent in 2013. In 2015, an increase of 2.5 per cent is forecast. The decentralization process seeking financial autonomy for local governments continues. To this end, in 2015 the property tax for local development will begin to apply to all municipalities (in 2014 it only applied to three). In 2015, the tax revenue raised from self-employed workers, non-agricultural cooperatives and farmers is expected to increase by 12 per cent, representing 5 per cent of gross income and 7 per cent of total tax revenue.

Until 2013, State enterprises could retain up to 30 per cent of after-tax profits; and since 2014 the proportion has been raised to 50 per cent. Another measure enhancing the liquidity of State firms, in force since 2014, is that these firms no longer pay a contribution in respect of the depreciation or amortization of fixed assets, so the resources in question can now be used to finance investments, equipment and other items. These measures favouring State enterprises entail a potential short-term reduction in fiscal revenues, but could have overall long-term positive effects if the projected production levels are attained.

Last, the 2014 and 2015 budgets both include appropriations for a 50-million peso fund to stimulate production development. The fund has the specific purpose of stimulating the production and service sector, which also includes the non-agricultural cooperatives.

Monetary policy

Following the announcement of monetary unification in October 2013, the composition of individual savings has been shifting from convertible pesos to Cuban pesos. Cash in circulation, along with on-demand saving accounts and current accounts, have increased notably from 2013 to 2014.

One of the current monetary policy objectives is to increase participation in the formal banking system. Balances held in bank deposits (on-demand saving accounts, current accounts and time deposits) grew from 23.9 per cent to 26.7 per cent of GDP between 2013 and 2014.

The number of bank accounts increased in both convertible pesos and Cuban pesos because self-employed workers and non-farm cooperatives operate with cheques and bank debit cards. With regard to lending, as at the end of September, 378,011 loans amounting to 3,231 million Cuban pesos had been granted: 63 per cent of these loans were for housing construction work, 35 per cent were for small-scale farmers, and 2 per cent were for self-employed workers, non-agricultural cooperatives and the purchase of cooking equipment.

In October 2014, the International Financial Action Task Force announced that Cuba was no longer subject to its monitoring process, in recognition of the country's efforts to prevent money laundering and terrorist financing.

Foreign-exchange policy

In late October 2013, the Government announced a process towards the elimination of monetary duality, indicating that, in an initial stage, the main changes would occur in the corporate sector. In addition, the launch of the implementation schedule was announced, although technical details were not made public. More recently, in March 2014, new procedural and accounting regulations were issued in preparation to the elimination of the dual currency. Methodologies were also established for wholesale and retail price-setting in corporate entities.

Given the complexity of this process, the Government has provided constant training to its employees directly involved in the myriad details required for the process. On the path towards monetary unification, steps have recently been taken to enable individuals to pay in one currency or another indistinctly (or in a combination thereof) for their goods purchases, which has made it necessary to issue high-denomination banknotes in Cuban pesos. This aims at the Cuban peso becoming Cuba's single currency.

Other policies

Recently, the Government of Cuba has updated its foreign investment policy to attract investment, in order to raise the rate of gross capital formation and boost growth in the economy.

The Government prioritized 11 sectors for attracting foreign capital, including agribusiness, industries in general, renewable energy, tourism, oil and mining, construction, the pharmaceutical and biotechnological industry, involving 246 investment opportunities. It published in a portfolio of key investments that will be updated annually.

A new more attractive legal regime has been put in place, offering significant tax incentives and guarantees to investors. In September 2013, the Government announced an important Decree Law establishing rules and regulations on the functioning of the Mariel special development zone, which is expected to be a major pole of attraction for FDI. Cuba recently approved investments in this zone by five foreign firms in the agrifood, light industry, electronics, chemicals and transport sectors. The firms in question are expected to start producing in the first half of 2016.

Despite the announcement of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States, the economic, trade and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba remains in force and hinders commercial transactions under international trade rules. For example, the ban on Cuba using the United States dollar in its international transactions is maintained; and correspondent relations between United States banks and Cuban banks are not permitted. Cuban exports to the United States remain banned, and the subsidiaries of United States companies established in third countries still cannot trade with Cuba. In addition, sales to Cuba of agricultural products from the United States remain subject to the conditions imposed by the law under which they were allowed in 2000, which prevents United States exporters from offering credits, and requires payments to be made in advance in cash, to mention just a few of the restrictions that hinder normal bilateral trade.

Recent performance of the main variables

The external sector

External debt servicing, along with the fact that Cuba is not a member of the international financial institutions, has resulted in Cuba's having a current account balance to GDP ratio of about 1 per cent in recent years. In 2014, Cuba achieved a trade surplus estimated at around $1.591 billion, which is 47 per cent smaller than that it achieved in 2013. Cuba is expected end 2015 with a trade surplus of around $1.378 billion, and a current account virtually in balance.

In 2014, Cuba continued to look for a realistic solution for its external obligations to its creditors. It also managed to restructure its short-term debt with the Netherlands insurer Atradius, some Japanese companies and other trade creditors. This was a continuation of restructuring efforts from previous years, involving cross-obligations with the Russian Federation, official short-term secured debt with Japan and private entrepreneurs, as well as with Mexico (which eliminated a substantial portion) and China (Cuba's second-ranking trading partner and its leading source of funding). Negotiations for an agreement on short-term secured debt with other European insurers are nearing completion.

In the case of remittances, the limit on the amount of dollars that a United States citizen can send to individuals in Cuba, every three months, was raised from US$ 500 to US$ 2,000. Travellers in any of the 12 authorized categories mentioned

above can take up to $10,000 in remittances to Cuba, compared with the previous limit of $3,000. According to information from the United States Treasury Department, certain remittances to Cuban nationals and non-governmental organizations for humanitarian projects are authorized without limitation, as are remittances to support the Cuban people through activities of recognized human rights organizations, independent organizations designed to promote a rapid, peaceful transition to democracy, and activities of individuals and non-governmental organizations that promote independent activity intended to strengthen civil society.[13] Last, remittances are authorized for the development of private businesses, including small farms.

In view of these measures, remittances to Cuba are likely to increase in 2015, possibly to around $1.8 billion per year. Tourism activity can also be expected to continue to grow. In 2014, tourist arrivals were up by 5.3 per cent, and this trend carried over into the first quarter of 2015, with growth of 14.4 per cent.

Economic growth

In 2014, GDP of the agriculture, livestock and forestry sector (which represents nearly 4 per cent of total GDP) grew by 2 per cent, while the manufacturing industry and construction (which jointly account for 18 per cent of GDP) decreased by 3.8 per cent and 2.3 per cent, respectively. By contrast, both basic and other services ended the year with positive growth, of 3.6 per cent and 2.5 per cent, respectively. It should be noted that growth in the agriculture sector was severely affected by weather conditions. In 2014, droughts affected the rice harvest, for example; and citrus production suffered from a pest attack. For 2015, a 4 per cent increase in the agriculture sector is expected, with significant growth in rice production. Nonetheless, food import requirements are forecast at around $2.2 billion (compared with $2.1 billion in 2014).

In 2015, GDP growth is forecast at around 4 per cent. The Government of Cuba expects positive growth in the industrial sector (from 11 to 12 per cent); in the sugar industry (22 per cent); in construction (15 per cent); in commerce (8 per cent); and in the hotels and restaurants sector (7.6 per cent).

Inflation, wages and employment

In 2014, the unemployment rate was 2.7 per cent (3.3 per cent in 2013), while the inflation rate was 2.5 per cent, and it is expected to stay in a range from 2 to 3 per cent year-on-year in 2015. The insufficient development of a wholesale market for input purchases has caused prices to rise at times because the expansion of small-scale restaurants is continuing and both individual consumers and small businesses use the same markets to purchase their goods. Nonetheless, the interaction between supply and demand is finally causing such peaks to gradually decline.

The number of own-account workers continues to grow. As at the end of December 2014, a total of 483,396 were working under this labour regime. By April 2015, the number had risen to 499,452. This number includes individuals who worked in small-scale restaurant, commerce and service units previously operated

[13] See information posted on the Treasury Department website, available from http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl9740.aspx.

by the State and now run either by non-agriculture cooperatives or by individuals. Thus, 28 per cent of all workers in Cuba are now working in the non-State sector of the economy.

The average monthly wage in Cuba rose by 24 per cent in nominal terms between 2013 and 2014; the largest increase among the different sectors of economic activity was 61.5 per cent in the public health and social assistance sector.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

Overall situation: effects of the embargo on the sectors of food security, as well as on agriculture, fisheries and the food industry

The main changes since the previous reporting period can be summarized as follows:

(a) Cuba's cereal production in 2015 is estimated at 872,000 tons (in milled rice equivalent), about the same level as the 2014 production result, mainly reflecting stagnant maize and rice output. Total cereal production would, nonetheless, be almost 12 per cent higher than the average of the previous five years.

(b) Paddy production decreased by 6 per cent in 2014 to 630,000 tons (420,000 tons, milled basis), on account of limited supplies of water for irrigation. Current expectations for the 2015 paddy production season, which is still at an early stage, point to little scope for production recovery in Cuba, given the continued water supply constraints. Production of maize in 2013 is estimated at 305,000 tons, an increase of almost 21 per cent over the previous season. Imported volumes of cereals have remained steady in recent years, around 2 million tons, and in 2013/14 they are expected to cover about 70 per cent of the country's domestic utilization.

The main effects of the embargo on agriculture, fisheries, livestock and the food industry should continue to be viewed from two different perspectives:

(a) The problem is brought about by the impossibility of taking full advantage of the export potential (for exports of coffee, honey, tobacco, live lobsters and aquaculture products) to the nearest market (United States of America). This has implied major losses since it has been necessary to sell to markets located farther away, with resulting higher marketing and distribution costs negatively affecting the country's foreign exchange earnings and its capacity to purchase basic products, especially food;

(b) High costs for inputs needed for agricultural, fisheries and livestock production (fuel, spare parts for agricultural machinery, animal feeds, phyto- and zoo-sanitary products and fertilizers, as well as top technological products such as herbicides, low toxicity insecticides, and other highly effective pesticides or veterinary pharmaceuticals and disease diagnostic kits, which in many cases are only produced by United States firms, decrease profitability and lower the country's ability to satisfy local food demand.

Overall, the embargo has very negative implications for Cuba's balance of trade and foreign exchange earnings, as well as for the country's supply of food and agriculture products. The embargo affects the import of food products for human consumption, particularly those destined to meet the needs of social programmes, since restrictions limit their quantity and quality, thus having a direct effect on the food security of the vulnerable segments of the population. The overall economic damage in the agricultural sector in the period from June 2013 to May 2014 is estimated at $307,367,200.

An additional problem resulting from the embargo relates to the difficulty experienced by Cuba in accessing external multilateral financing for development programmes in agriculture and rural development in general, and the related unavailability of resources for rehabilitating and modernizing agricultural equipment and infrastructure.

Even the operations of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are directly affected, although officially exempted from the embargo. However, delays in or blocking of payments to FAO staff (if done in United States dollars) and providers for project procurement reduces the willingness of suppliers to sell to FAO-Cuba and increases the cost of procurement from the few remaining suppliers.

Effects of the embargo on selected agricultural commodities

Cereals

The economic damage for cereal production as result of the embargo is estimated at $2,447,830. Of this, $571,830 results from price differentials between procurement of inputs in the United States and more distant and expensive markets. Of particular impact is the difficulty in obtaining quality seeds, as a result of the fact that the international seed market is dominated by a few multinational companies. The economic damage due to this factor is estimated at $1,057,125.

Preliminary forecasts of Cuba's cereal (milled rice equivalent) production in 2015 point to an output level of 872,000 tons, virtually unchanged from the previous year, but above the country's five-year average. Planting activities for the main 2015 paddy crops were launched in April and will continue through July. Paddy production in Cuba in 2015 is expected to remain close to the 2014 reduced level of 630,000 tons. The subdued outlook mirrors expectations that, for a second consecutive season, planting will be limited by restricted water supplies for irrigation, a factor that would add to the limited availability of agricultural inputs and equipment, notwithstanding the steadfast provision of Government support to the sector as part of the country's rice self-sufficiency programme.

Despite ongoing Government efforts to liberalize and promote domestic food production, Cuba remains highly dependent on imports. It is anticipated that recent reductions in domestic output, especially for rice, will prolong this trend in the short term. Current forecasts indicate imports of 390,000 tons of rice in 2015, the bulk of which is likely to be supplied by Viet Nam, under a long-standing preferential arrangement concluded on a government-to-government basis. Nevertheless, since 2011, South American countries, in particular Brazil, have also emerged as alternative suppliers for Cuba. In the case of coarse grains, imports are projected to be in the order of 860,000 tons in 2014/15 (July/June), while wheat imports are

projected to reach about 760,000 tons. Overall, cereal imports account for about 70 per cent of domestic utilization.

Oilseeds

Oilseed production in Cuba is not significant and, as a result, the country depends almost entirely on imports to meet its vegetable oil and meal needs. Commodities dominating imports are soybeans, soybean oil and soybean meal. Recently, Brazil started providing assistance to Cuba for the cultivation of adapted, high-yielding varieties. When the United States embargo came into effect, Argentina and Brazil became the main suppliers of soybeans and derived products. Both Canada and Mexico have occasionally shipped small volumes to Cuba. Countries and entities from which Cuba imported non-soybean oils and non-soybean meal include Argentina, Canada, China, Mexico and the European Union. Imports of soybeans and derived products from the United States resumed in 2002, largely replacing purchases from other regions. However, a United States measure introduced in 2005 is considered to have kept United States imports below the level that could otherwise be achieved, while permitting purchases from other countries, notably soybean oil imports from Brazil, to expand again.

Raw sugar

According to the most recent estimates of FAO, Cuba produced 1.8 million tons of sugar in 2013/2014, which is over 30 per cent above the average level for the period of 2008-2012. The increase in output confirms a steady recovery of production since 2011, driven by investment in the sugar production capacities at both the farm and factory levels. In addition, price incentives provided support for expansion. Sugar consumption is estimated to reach 595,000 tons in 2013/14, an increase of 4 per cent over the 2012/13 season. Because of rising production, exports increased by 9 per cent in the 2013/14 period from their levels in 2012/13, reaching 950,000 tons. Preliminary estimates for 2014/15 indicate that sugar production and export would continue to increase. As a result of the embargo, Cuba does not have access to the United States market under the raw sugar tariff rate quota.

Meat

National meat production has been growing slowly and stood at 285,000 tons in 2013. Pork is the most important category, followed by beef and poultry. Cuba imported 222,000 tons of meat in 2013. The principal meat imported is poultry, followed by beef and pork. In 2013, 189,000 tons of poultry were imported, of which 73 per cent originated in the United States, while a further 22 per cent was supplied by Brazil. Brazil is the main source of imports of beef and pork, followed by the United States. The impact on poultry production is estimated at $41.8 million. The economic damage to pork production is estimated at almost $8.2 million as result of high import costs for animal feed and difficulties in accessing modern production technologies. The price differential for importing 194,504 tons of animal feed from more distant markets alone resulted in additional costs of $6,572,400, owing to a lack of offers from United States markets and difficulties in accessing modern production technologies, manufacturing and distribution systems, veterinary pharmaceuticals and other inputs. Despite the recent changes in government policy in favour of the development of the national

agriculture, productivity increases are hampered by restricted access to financial resources and technologies and limited infrastructure. Restrictions on the import of technology and genetics means that the lowest cost or most convenient source of supplies cannot necessarily be accessed.

Dairy products

Since 2005, milk production has increased substantially in Cuba and was estimated at 610,000 tons for 2013. Imports account for approximately 60 per cent of domestic use. Milk powder is the principal item imported, with supplies coming from Oceania, Latin America and Europe. The national dairy sector is one of the priority areas of the food policy of the Government of Cuba, which aims to become less dependent on imported food. The high prices on the international dairy market have prompted the authorities to raise producer prices also, in order to stimulate national milk production. Constraints on the sector's growth include the high cost of imported feed and the limited availability of fuel for transport and distribution.

Fish products

Almost all of Cuba's fish exports comprise high-value products, notably frozen shrimp and lobster, which are in high demand on the international market. However, the embargo prevents access to the United States market, which is one of the most important markets and the leading world importer for fish and fish products. As a result, Cuba exports to more distant destinations, facing higher marketing and distribution costs. In addition, the economic crisis in some of the markets has had a negative impact on demand, resulting in a decline in exports. Export earnings amounted to an estimated $47 million in 2013 for a total volume of 4,000 tons (product weight); this represents, in value terms, a decrease of 10 per cent compared with 2012 and of 49 per cent compared with 2002. Fish imports, mainly comprising low-value fish products, remained rather stable in 2013, compared with 2012, reaching an estimated $25 million.

Tobacco

The impact of the embargo in this sector is estimated at $150.3 million in total from the potential loss of export income, higher transport and transaction costs and increasingly difficult competition in all markets. The exclusion of the United States market from the export of Cuban premium tobacco products alone is estimated to have produced damage in the amount of $8.8 million.

Fruit

The economic impact of the embargo is estimated at $2,116,045 on the import of inputs required for export; other effects are caused by freight and insurance costs, and foregone income on potential sales to the United States market.

Honey

The economic damage resulting from foregone income on potential sales to the United States market amounted to $14,279,000; and the economic damage resulting from difficulties in accessing modern production technologies for the production and export of honey, with higher value added in small formats, amounted to $1,865,714.

Various crops and coffee

The impact of the embargo in this sector is estimated at $30,500,000, owing to the lack of access to diagnostic kits for diseases and laboratory reagents produced in the United States. The lack of access prevents proper analysis of the quality of the pesticides and the quality of the treatment, with an incidence of approximately 20 per cent in ultimate production yields, such as rice, beans, corn and coffee.

Forestry

The damage to the forestry sector is estimated at $12,531,800. In Cuba, outdated North American machinery is used for extracting and stripping wood. The lack of spare parts for that equipment causes disruptions to the production process.

Assistance to Cuba by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FAO continues to provide support to Cuba, notably in promoting rural development and fisheries, with an emphasis on food security. In addition, FAO has assisted Cuban institutions in organizing several international congresses and events in the areas of sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, animal production and health surveillance, cooperatives and family farming, fisheries and related policies, forestry and biodiversity, the environment and climate change. In addition, it assists Cuban experts in providing help for South-South cooperation and in attending meetings on international conventions and agreements. The travel logistics and flight bookings are also affected by the embargo. Following the international seminar on urban and peri-urban agriculture, held in Havana in 2012, an extensive study on the subject was conducted in cities of the Latin American and the Caribbean region; the resulting FAO publication *Ciudades Más Verdes en América Latina y el Caribe* includes an in-depth focus on urban and peri-urban agriculture in and around Havana.

Within the framework of the South-South Cooperation Programme, a tripartite agreement was signed between Cuba, Cabo Verde and FAO on 13 May 2011, whereby Cuba would provide technical assistance to Cabo Verde through 1 expert and 12 technicians over a period of 18 months. The main objective is to plan and carry out activities in the following areas within national programme of Cabo Verde for Food Security, including horticulture and vegetable production, water management, small animal farming, hydroponic vegetable gardening and packaging of vegetable products. The programme is ongoing. FAO provided speakers and funds for the International Conference on Animal Health Surveillance held in Havana from 7 to 9 May 2014.

Technical support for the life-cycle management of pesticides continues to be provided to Cuba as part of the regional initiatives under the project funded by the European Commission to support capacity-building related to multilateral environmental agreements in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, for the clean-up of obsolete pesticides, pesticides management and sustainable pest management. The project has supported the inventory of obsolete pesticides, strengthening pesticide registration and raising awareness of pesticide issues. Cuba participates in project workshops.

FAO provided technical support and assistance to develop tools for Cuba to establish a national information system mechanism for applying the new monitoring

approach for the Global Plan of Action on Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The Cuban delegation participates routinely through the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and its intergovernmental working group, in developing the policy framework of the Second Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, indicators and targets for plant genetic resources and preparation of the Genebank Standards for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

Effects of the embargo on projects implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Cuba

As a result of the embargo, projects implemented by FAO in Cuba are affected in terms of procurement procedures that complement the technical assistance provided by the organization since resources that could be imported from the United States of America have to be imported from more distant markets at much higher prices and with additional freight costs. It would be cheaper to purchase the goods in the United States, which would in turn make more funds available for projects.

The embargo is still affecting the payments process and banking transactions to and from suppliers that provide services to cooperative projects and to the FAO country office. This is evidenced by banks transfer rejections on sales to Cuba; the inability of suppliers to deliver products that had been obtained from other United States companies; and the inability of suppliers to transfer funds to Cuba for payment of locally hired services. The difficulties in banking processes affecting FAO personnel remain high.

A summary of damages resulting from the embargo in some of the sectors where FAO is providing technical assistance and other sectors included in its are set out below:

- Price differences owing to the relocation of the import market.
- Additional charges on freight insurance.
- Additional costs owing to a freeze on assets.
- Monetary damages.
- Economic losses owing to lack of access to North American high technology.
- Relocation of exports.

International Atomic Energy Agency

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

The assistance activities undertaken by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for all of its member States, including Cuba, are governed by article III.C of its IAEA Statute, which reads as follows: "In carrying out its functions, the Agency shall not make assistance to members subject to any political, economic, military, or other conditions incompatible with the provisions of this statute."

However, the existing embargo poses certain difficulties to the implementation of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme in Cuba. The procurement of essential equipment and material (such as radiopharmaceuticals) is quite often subject to cost increases and delays as the number of vendors able to procure for and/or ship to Cuba is very limited. At the same time, restrictions apply to the participation of Cuban nationals in IAEA-organized training activities or meetings in the United States and vice versa. In accordance with the above-mentioned article of its statute, the Agency tries to overcome these difficulties, to the extent possible, by, for example, sending Cuban nationals to other countries for training in, in order to meet the requirements of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme in Cuba.

International Civil Aviation Organization

[Original: English]
[3 June 2015]

In the light of the recent moves between Cuba and the United States of America towards normalization of their bilateral relations, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is monitoring the developments and their implications for civil aviation.

Through its Technical Cooperation Programme, ICAO is currently assisting the Government of Cuba's Civil Aviation Institute in procuring necessary equipment and services for a new transportation network, and related maintenance and support services for the regional Aeronautical Fixed Services Telecommunications Network (known as MEVA III).

Cuba has been active as a member of several regional technical cooperation projects implemented through ICAO. The objective of the first project is to provide administrative assistance in the management and administration of the secretariat of the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission. The second relates to fostering the implementation of performance-based air navigation systems in the Caribbean region, leading to a seamless global air traffic management system. The third concerns a regional safety oversight system, which encompasses the requisite technical, logistic and administrative support in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on International Civil Aviation and its annexes.

International Civil Defence Organization

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

The International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO) reaffirms its view that the United Nations is an appropriate forum in which to address questions related to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. We therefore welcome the positive consideration of resolution 69/5, adopted by the General Assembly on 28 October 2014, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. The Republic of Cuba became a full member of ICDO on 18 December 2014. Its needs are great in respect of all the four steps related to disaster management: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Thus, in order to fulfil its

obligations towards its member States, ICDO is in the process of providing technical assistance to different areas of civil defence in Cuba, through the transfer of equipment and technology and support for training courses in civil defence.

International Fund for Agricultural Development

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

Cuba participates in the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) as a member State, and the country has been reintegrated into the regular lending programme of IFAD since September 2012. Implementation of an IFAD-funded project approved in 2013 cooperative rural development in the eastern region began in 2014. In May 2015, the President of IFAD visited Cuba and met with the country's Vice-President and two ministers directly involved in supporting the project. IFAD has strengthened it partnership through the implementation of the project, and maintains an open dialogue with the Government of Cuba on all matters regarding rural development, agricultural production and food security in the country.

International Labour Organization

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

The direct and indirect effects of the blockade on the Cuban economy and people do not only affect the enterprises in the country but also, to an even greater extent, their workers and the population in general. The blockade also imposes burdens on the financial sector and the availability of credit in the framework of Cuba's international trade relations, thus limiting potential investment in social and economic infrastructure and trade opportunities. Ending the blockade would turn the overall loss of at least $1 billion into an opportunity for productive investment, employment generation and new job opportunities.

Although progress has been made over the past months, the International Labour Organization (ILO) observes with concern that, owing to unnecessary restrictions on the transfer of remittances, an indirect tax continues to be imposed on salaries legitimately earned abroad and sent for household spending on basic human needs such as food, clothing, education, housing, water and sanitation. The blockade of other financial transactions still represents a serious bottleneck for business development and job creation since decent work depends largely on productive investment.

The restrictions resulting from limited access to technology engender further difficulties for enterprises, and social and economic development. In particular, the blockade imposed on the acquisitions of medical technology and medicines has a direct impact on the health situation of the population in need of medical services and on the health infrastructure in general. ILO is particularly concerned about those impacts on children, workers and elderly people.

ILO recently undertook a mission to Cuba in order to confirm its commitment to providing technical assistance to the Labour Ministry, the Cuban Confederation

of Workers, the National Employer's Organization and Azcuba on the following thematic areas (and others that might be agreed upon in the future):

- Rural employment/productivity improvements in the sugar industry
- Safety and health at work: prevention strategies
- Labour inspection
- Social security accounting models
- International labour standards
- Wage policies

Cuba is a deputy member of the ILO Governing Body and actively participates in the International Labour Conference and other committees of the Organization. ILO considers that the General Assembly is the appropriate forum for addressing questions related to ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

International Maritime Organization

[Original: English]
[28 May 2015]

As a member State of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Cuba benefits from participation in the meetings of IMO bodies and is a recipient of assistance provided by available technical cooperation programmes, including IMO regional programmes to support maritime development in Latin America and in the Caribbean, as well as global relevant programmes.

IMO maintains collaborative relations with all Latin American member States, including Cuba. Since the early 1980s, IMO has collaborated closely with the Operative Network for Regional Cooperation among Maritime Authorities of the Americas, a Latin American maritime network comprising South America, Cuba, Mexico and Panama.

IMO assistance to Latin America is guided by the maritime strategies of the region, which are revised every five years, and the Organization will continue to focus on supporting their implementation. Countries in the Network have addressed issues such as safety standards and training aspects and marine environment protection through regional strategies, with numerous training activities organized in cooperation with IMO. In this context, and in accordance with the decentralization policies adopted by IMO, most IMO support is channelled through the Network on the basis of a memorandum of understanding signed with the secretariat of the Network. Through this instrument, the Network is assigned responsibility for the management and execution of the regional technical cooperation activities identified by the respective countries, including Cuba, as priorities for building capacities towards the effective implementation and enforcement of IMO global maritime standards.

Cuba also receives technical assistance from the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre in the wider Caribbean region, a regional activity centre based in Curação, which aims to assist countries in the

wider Caribbean region in preventing and responding to major pollution incidents in the marine environment.

IMO has not encountered difficulties in delivering any of the activities in the projects mentioned above as a result of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Inter-Parliamentary Union

[Original: English]
[4 June 2015]

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has for many years held the view that "economic sanctions should be avoided as far as possible [...] to ensure international peace and security". This was stipulated in the IPU resolution adopted in Jakarta in October 2000 by the 104th IPU Conference, entitled "Are embargoes and economic sanctions still ethically acceptable, do they still work, and are they suited to achieving their purpose in an ever more globalized world?".

IPU recently adopted by consensus a resolution on international law as it relates to national sovereignty, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and human rights at its 132nd Assembly in Hanoi. In the resolution, it reiterates that States should refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and urges States in the conduct of their foreign relations, to ensure that their economic, financial and trade measures are in compliance with international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

IPU welcomes the recent efforts by the United States of America and Cuba to normalize and improve their relations and is very hopeful that these will lead soon to the lifting of the embargo imposed on Cuba. It issued a statement in December 2014 expressing this view.

International Strategy for Disaster Relief

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

Cuba has made considerable effort to implement the priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, and to consistently monitor and report on progress through the Framework monitor, a voluntary monitoring tool. It has made comprehensive and distinctive advances for the protection of the population against natural hazards that recurrently affect the Caribbean region. The Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has worked with Cuba to facilitate its participation in knowledge-sharing processes on disaster risk reduction, in particular through the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas, and in the subregional projects carried out by Inter-Agency Secretariat in the Caribbean, aiming to disseminate best practices in disaster risk reduction and recovery.

The Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015, adopted the successor instrument to the Hyogo

Framework for Action, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. The Sendai Framework sets the expected outcome of reducing disaster risk and losses and contains seven agreed global targets to measure progress. It also places emphasis on understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster risk governance, investing and strengthening resilience, preparing for better responses, including early warning systems, and "building back better" after disasters. The implementation of the Sendai Framework, including the achievement of its global targets, will necessitate Cuba's access to disaster risk information, scientific and technical advances as well as enhanced means of implementation, including resources from donors and international financial institutions.

International Telecommunication Union

[Original: English]
[11 May 2015]

Since May 2013, the Administration of Cuba has reported to the Radiocommunication Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union any harmful interference to their broadcasting services.

With regard to the above, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) received, during the reporting period, the following four notes from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other international organizations in Switzerland:

- Contribution from Cuba on strengthening the role of the International Telecommunication Union in building confidence and security in the use of information and communications technology to the ITU Council, held from 6 to 15 May 2014, referencing the Associated Press published article entitled "United States secretly built 'Cuban twitter' to stir unrest".
- Note verbale 659/2014 dated 15 September 2014, containing the report by Cuba on General Assembly resolution 68/8 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.
- Note verbale 796/2014 dated 27 October 2014, containing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 68/8.
- Letter 296/2015 dated 22 April 2015 by the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations Office in Geneva and other international organization in Switzerland, Anayansi Rodriguez Camejo, referencing the denouncement by the Cuban telecommunications enterprise ETECSA of the ZunZuneo project and Martinoticias activities, stating that the situation had been aggravated by severe informatics attacks suffered by Cuban information communications networks in violation of international law and the most basic regulations that ought to guarantee peaceful, orderly and safe cyberspace.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

In past years, several resolutions and declarations adopted by United Nations human rights bodies, such as the Human Rights Council, have raised concerns about the negative impact of comprehensive unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights of the population at large, especially when the measures are imposed without making any distinction between States and the civilian population. The negative impact is particularly severe on vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities, all of whom become victims of such sanctions and are more affected by them than the States or Governments the sanctions are supposed to target.

In the light of these concerns, the General Assembly has considered the issue of unilateral coercive measures in its annual resolutions since 1997 (resolution 51/103), requesting Member States to notify the Secretary-General about the implications and negative effects of unilateral coercive measures on their populations and requesting the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly thereon. Similarly, the Human Rights Council and its predecessor, the Commission on Human Rights, have considered the issue of unilateral coercive measures on an annual basis since 1994 (resolution 1994/47), requesting the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to address the issue and submit related reports at its sessions.

In its resolution 27/21 of October 2014, the Human Rights Council stressed that unilateral coercive measures and legislation were contrary to international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States. The Council also expressed that it was deeply disturbed by the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to life, the rights to health and medical care, the right to freedom from hunger and the right to an adequate standard of living, food, education, work and housing.

In the same resolution, the Council decided to appoint a Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights for a period of three years. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur is to gather information from different sources (including civil society) and study trends, developments and challenges in relation to the issue. The first Special Rapporteur, Idriss Jazairy, was elected in March 2015 and assumed his mandate on 1 May 2015. He is expected to present his reports to the Council and to the General Assembly on a yearly basis. In addition, the Council decided to organize a biannual panel discussion on the issue.

OHCHR has also undertaken several initiatives, such as to conduct workshops in April 2013 and May 2014, but these were held after the deadline for the submission of the present reply.

In 2015, the Human Rights Council also requested its Advisory Committee, with the support of OHCHR, to prepare a research-based report on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights and to promote accountability (A/HRC/28/74). The report contains a case study on Cuba that highlights the negative impact of the embargo of the United States on access to

medicines and technologies, including limitations to the enjoyment of human rights by Cuban citizens (para. 24). The Committee also stressed in the report that the unilateral measures restricted Cuba's access to water treatment chemicals and spare parts for the island's water supply system, leading to serious cutbacks in the supply of safe drinking water and a rise in morbidity and mortality owing to water-borne diseases (para. 26). With regard to medicines, it also indicated that Cuban physicians had access to less than 50 per cent of the new medicines available on the world market and often had inadequate supplies of them (para. 27). It also reported that the Government of Cuba had indicated having to resort to buying medicines in non-competitive markets and paying around 30 per cent more for them as a result of the embargo (para. 28).

The Committee concluded that in order to assess the impact of unilateral coercive measures on the human rights of the civilian population and on vulnerable groups in particular, an on-site visit to the States affected would be required for verification, in an independent manner, of the actual effects of such measures on the different segments of the population (ibid., para. 59). The conclusion coincides with the request by several special procedures mandate holders to conduct official visits to Cuba.

On 19 December 2014, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, through his spokesperson, welcomed the developments towards normalizing the relationship between Cuba and the United States and that expressed the hope that progress towards normalizing relations between the two countries would have a beneficial effect on the human rights of all Cubans, and that he would therefore be delighted to see the unblocking of the situation. In 2007, the Personal Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights had described the effects of the embargo against Cuba as "disastrous" (A/HRC/4/12, para. 7) since they deprived Cuba of vital access to medicines, new scientific and medical technology, food, chemical water treatment and electricity.

In 2008, Cuba signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, although it has not yet ratified them. Ratifying them will provide an opportunity for Cuba to raise public awareness about the impact of the embargo imposed by the United States of America, in particular with regard to General Comment No. 8 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In the General Comment, the Committee stated that sanctions almost always had a dramatic impact on the rights recognized in the Covenant. In particular, the sanctions caused significant disruption in the distribution of food, pharmaceuticals and sanitation supplies, jeopardized the quality of food and the availability of clean drinking water, severely interfered with the functioning of basic health and education systems, and undermined the right to work. In addition, their unintended consequences could include reinforcement of the power of oppressive élites, the emergence, almost invariably, of a black market and the generation of huge windfall profits for the privileged élites that managed it, enhancement of the control of the governing élites over the population at large and restriction of opportunities to seek asylum or to manifest political opposition.

Office of the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system for operational activities for development, Cuba

[Original: English]
[30 May 2015]

Cuba, a country with a high human development ranking, has already achieved many Millennium Development Goals. The main challenge is to maintain the quality of its social services and sustain the Goals already achieved.

The Government of Cuba is implementing a transformation process to update the economic model. The process focuses on national priorities, such as economic efficiency and productivity, the national food security strategy and import substitution policies. National authorities have stated their strong commitment to maintaining social development standards. The economic and social policy guidelines address the fundamental principles of the updating process. One of the guidelines calls for the promotion of multilateral collaboration, with particular reference to the institutions of the United Nations system. In that context, the United Nations system supports the efforts of national authorities to address emerging issues and challenges.

The United Nations system organizations in Cuba welcome the dialogue between Cuba and the United States and the steps taken towards normalizing relations, on the basis of the 17 December 2014 announcements and the measures introduced by the United States of America on 16 January 2015. Both countries have expressed interest in cooperating in such areas as health; environmental issues and climate change; information and communication technologies; and response to disasters. However, the impact of the embargo on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of human development in Cuba remains, affecting the most vulnerable socioeconomic groups of the Cuban population in particular. In addition, the embargo hampers the update of the Cuban economic and social model.

The United Nations country team in Cuba comprises the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme. In addition, non-resident agencies, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labour Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDs, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the United Nations Volunteers programme have activities and initiatives in Cuba.

Implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2014-2018) was initiated in Cuba in 2014, focusing on four strategic cooperation areas: population dynamics and social-cultural services; sustainable economic development, which includes value chains, local development and sustainable energy development; food security; and environmental sustainability and disaster risk management.

Each United Nations agency, fund and programme has contributed specific inputs to the present reply, setting out the most significant cross-cutting issues that are having a negative impact on the humanitarian and development cooperation of the United Nations system in Cuba. It was not possible to demonstrate any substantial improvements in 2014.

Purchase of inputs at non-competitive prices and limitations on the import of goods, services and technologies patented in the United States

Cuban national companies and foreign companies established in Cuba are not allowed to purchase products, components or technologies from the United States territory even though the United States represents the closest, most competitive and most diversified market. Alternative markets that are adequate are more distant, resulting in higher importation costs and delays in delivery time. Goods, services or technologies produced by the United States, covered by United States patents, or containing any component produced and/or patented by the United States, are not available to Cuba. In addition, the embargo places restrictions on shipping line companies whose vessels dock in Cuban harbours. This situation significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, limiting the availability of transportation and delaying the loading of goods.

The United Nations system offices in the country can rarely benefit from global United Nations corporate contracts with United States companies for the purchase of equipment and services, such as computers, software licences and Internet services. Providers must therefore be exclusively identified for the offices, entailing higher prices and administrative costs. Consequently, financial resources that could have been used to more effectively achieve the expected programme and development results are required to cover additional costs incurred as a result of conditions caused by the embargo. Imports of development and humanitarian products, such as medicines, medical equipment, fertilizers, food supplements, laboratory equipment, agricultural implements, educational tools, computers, information and communications software, and construction materials are affected by the restrictions, even if they are purchased through multilateral cooperation.

Development credits granted by international financial institutions and financial services from United States banks

The embargo has limited access by Cuba to development credits granted by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, which, in turn, has narrowed the possibility of obtaining resources to support the national and/or local development plans of Cuba financially.

United Nations offices in Cuba cannot make use of corporate accounts with United States banks or use the United States dollar as a currency of payment. The offices therefore have to take additional administrative measures to carry out programme-related financial operations, resulting in higher costs, the use of third country banks, and a heavier administrative burden. The related incremented costs have been covered by the United Nations and project funds from other donor countries. The embargo has also affected the financial transactions, salaries and banking and insurance services of United Nations international and national staff.

Missions to United Nations Headquarters and exchange of expertise

Any mission to United Nations Headquarters in New York or Washington, D.C., by Cuban United Nations staff and Cuban experts or national authorities is complex and expensive. Owing to the lack of regular direct flights from Cuba to New York or Washington, D.C., longer and costlier alternative routes through third countries need to be booked; and the planning of trips involving Cuban nationals requires extra time because of the visa process.

These conditions have a negative impact on professional exchanges and the building of partnerships in key areas of development.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

[Original: English]
[11 June 2015]

Cuba is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or to its 1967 Protocol. Nevertheless, thousands of refugees have found protection in Cuba over the years, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has supported the Government with protection matters for more than two decades.

Thus far, Cuba has maintained its de facto policy of non-refoulement for all refugees recognized under the UNHCR mandate. Asylum applicants who arrive in Cuba are allowed to provisionally remain in the country while UNHCR conducts refugee status determination and, upon recognition of status under the Office's mandate, identifies durable solutions for them, mainly through resettlement.

Recognized refugees in Cuba are granted access to the Government's free health-care and education systems, with treatment similar to that of nationals. Some refugees have also benefited from the country's university scholarship programme.

To date, Cuba does not have a local integration policy for refugees. However, in 2013 and 2014, a limited number of refugees were granted permanent resident permits on the basis of the current national legislation, resulting in a durable solution. These individuals were given a legal status that grants them rights and opportunities similar to those of nationals.

Cuba participated in the process to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, aimed at exploring new approaches to the humanitarian needs of the displaced through international solidarity and cooperation. Cuba was also a participant in the ministerial meeting in Brazil in December 2014, where it and representatives of 27 other countries and three territories in Latin America and the Caribbean reaffirmed their commitment to upholding the highest international and regional protection standards, implementing innovative solutions for refugees and other displaced persons and ending the plight of stateless persons. This commitment was embodied in the Brazil declaration and its 10-year plan of action.

Developments in 2014-2015

If the embargo is abolished and the normalization of bilateral relations ensues, more favourable conditions may likely be created for persons in Cuba covered by

the UNHCR mandate. Opportunities for the local integration of refugees could be explored and improved and international cooperation could lead to Cuba's accession to the international refugee and statelessness instruments as well as to the adoption of more favourable protection measures for such persons.

South Centre

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

On 28 October 2014, the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/5 by an overwhelming vote of 188 to 2, reiterating its long-standing call upon all States to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble of the resolution, in which it recalled the need to eliminate unilateral economic and trade measures by one State against another that affected the free flow of international trade, referring in particular to the United States 1996 "Helms-Burton Act", extraterritorial effects of which affected that sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of persons under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventieth session. The present input by the South Centre is prepared in response to such a request as a contribution to the report of the Secretary-General, in order to highlight the perspectives of developing countries, as expressed through their multilateral institutions, with respect to the imposition of unilateral economic and trade measures by one State against another, particularly by the United States of America against Cuba.

The South Centre is the intergovernmental organization of developing countries that helps developing countries to combine their efforts and expertise to promote their common interests in the international arena. The South Centre undertakes research on various international policy areas that are relevant to the promotion of the development interests of developing countries. Developing countries have long stressed that the international law principles relating to the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs, and the freedom of international trade and navigation, are crucial principles that ensure the development and maintenance of a rules-based multilateral regime that is conducive to peace and the development of developing countries.

In this vein, developing countries have been united in calling for the need to eliminate the unilateral application of economic and trade measures by one State against another that affect the ability of the latter State to enjoy the benefits of unhampered international commerce and navigation. The implementation of the Helms-Burton Act constitutes such a measure since it affects Cuba directly, hampers its ability to conduct international trade and also adversely affects the ability of third-party States from engaging in unhampered international trade with Cuba. The extraterritorial effect of the Act on third-party States has long been recognized, making it more difficult for persons and business entities from third-party States to engage in normal business and trade relations with Cuban persons and business entities. The European Union, for example, in the framework of the its Common

Commercial Policy, has firmly and continuously opposed such extraterritorial measures.[14] The European Union stressed that, while it recognized the decision by the Government of the United States to lift restrictions on remittances and family travel to Cuba, it could not accept that unilaterally imposed measures impeded its economic and commercial relations with Cuba. The Helms-Burton Act of 1996 therefore has extraterritorial effects that extend beyond United States territorial jurisdiction and has a severe impact on the economic and social development and economic growth of Cuba. In 2014, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba indicated that his country's estimate of the accumulated economic damages of the blockade against Cuba imposed by the United States had amounted to $1.1 trillion.

On 29 May 2015, the United States dropped Cuba from its list of State sponsors of terrorism. This is an important step towards restoring normal relations between the two countries and is to be welcomed. So far, however, there has been no lifting of the embargo and other sanctions imposed by the United States on Cuba. The South Centre hopes that in the near future, the measure will be part of the process of normalization of diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries.

Through their votes in the General Assembly and through their various multilateral institutions such as the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement, developing countries have frequently called upon all States to refrain from promulgating and applying such unilateral laws and measures and to request States that have and which continue to apply such laws and measures to repeal or invalidate them as soon as possible.

The First South Summit, held in Havana in 2000, gathered together the heads of State and Government of more than 100 developing countries. In the Declaration of the South Summit (A/55/74, annex I), they stressed that they firmly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries, and reiterated the urgent need to eliminate them immediately. They emphasized that such actions not only undermined the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law but also severely threatened the freedom of trade and investment. They therefore call upon the international community to neither recognize the measures nor apply them.

Five years later, at the Second South Summit, held in Doha, Qatar, in 2005, developing country leaders reiterated their opposition to such measures and called on the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries (see A/60/111, annex I). Additionally, they also called on the United States to end the embargo against Cuba as follows:

> We call upon the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba which, in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and to the principle of neighbourliness, causes huge material

[14] Statement made by the representative of the European Union after the vote on the draft resolution concerning the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, available from http://eu-un.europa.eu/articles/fr/article_15655_fr.htm.

> loses and economic damage to the people of Cuba. We urge strict compliance with resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/8, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54/21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7 and 59/11 of the United Nations General Assembly and express deep concern over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo against Cuba and over continuous new legislative measures geared to intensify it. We therefore express concern and reject the new measures recently implemented by the United States Government aimed at tightening the embargo. Those measures constitute a violation of Cuba's sovereignty and a massive violation of the rights of its people.

At the sixteenth summit, held in Teheran in 2012, the Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement also spoke in the same vein. In the summit declaration, they agreed to:

> Refrain from recognizing, adopting or implementing extraterritorial or unilateral coercive measures or laws, including unilateral economic sanctions, other intimidating measures, and arbitrary travel restrictions, that seek to exert pressure on non-aligned countries — threatening their sovereignty and independence, and their freedom of trade and investment — and prevent them from exercising their right to decide, by their own free will, their own political, economic and social systems, where such measures or laws constitute flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations, international law, the multilateral trading system as well as the norms and principles governing friendly relations among States, and in this regard agreed to oppose and condemn these measures or laws and their continued application, persevere with efforts to effectively reverse them and urge other States to do likewise, as called for by the General Assembly and other United Nations organs; and agreed to request States applying these measures or laws to revoke them fully and immediately.[15]

In paragraph 468 of the declaration, they expressed deep concern at the imposition of laws and other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions, against developing countries, which violates the Charter of the United Nations and undermines international law and the rules of the World Trade Organization and also severely threaten freedom of trade and investment. They also called on the United States to cease its embargo on Cuba, as follows in paragraph 376:

> The Heads of State or Government once again reiterated their call to the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba which, in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the UN Charter and international law, and to the principle of neighbourliness, is causing huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba. They once again urged strict compliance with resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54/21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7, 59/11, 60/12, 61/11, 62/3, 63/7, 64/6, 65/6 and 66/6 of the UN General Assembly. They expressed deep concern over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo against Cuba and rejected the reinforcement of the measures adopted by the Government of United States, aimed at tightening the embargo, as well as all other recent measures carried out by the Government of the United States against the people of Cuba. They

[15] Final document of the sixteenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement para. 24.4, available from http://namiran.org/Files/16thSummit/FinalDocument%28NAM2012-Doc.1-Rev.2%29.pdf.

> urged the Government of the United States to return the territory now occupied by the Guantanamo Naval Base to Cuban sovereignty, and to put an end to aggressive radio and television transmission against Cuba. They reiterated that those measures constitute a violation of Cuba's sovereignty and a massive violation of the human rights of its people.

In addition, in paragraph 574.3, they reaffirmed that, bearing in mind the Charter, economic and financial sanctions always had a negative impact on the rights recognized in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in particular the realization of the right to development. They went on to state that such sanction often caused significant disruption in the distribution of food, pharmaceuticals and sanitation supplies, jeopardized the quality of food and the availability of clean drinking water, severely interfered with the functioning of basic health and education systems, undermined the right to work, and were serious obstacles to development of the targeted States.

Even more recently, the political leaders of the developing countries again addressed this issue during the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77 and China held in 2014 in Santa Cruz, Plurinational State of Bolivia. In their Declaration entitled "For a new world order for living well", the leaders made the following statements against such sanctions (A/68/948, annex):

> We reaffirm our firm rejection of the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions, against developing countries, and reiterate the urgent need to eliminate them immediately. We emphasize that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also severely threaten the freedom of trade and investment. We therefore call on the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries. (para. 239)

> We reiterate our call, made at the second South Summit, organized by the Group of 77 and China and held in Doha in 2005, for the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, which, in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as to the principle of neighbourliness, causes huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba. We urge strict compliance to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly on this matter. We also take note that in the Havana Declaration, the Heads of State and Government of the Community of the Latin American and Caribbean States reaffirmed their strongest rejection of the implementation of unilateral coercive measures and once again reiterated their solidarity with Cuba, while reaffirming their call upon the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on that sisterly nation for more than five decades. They rejected the inclusion of Cuba in the list of States sponsors of terrorism published by the State Department of the United States, and requested that an end be put to that unilateral practice. (para. 241)

The near universality of global opinion against such sanctions is therefore very clear. Their economic and social impacts have been also well recognized and documented both through academic research and by reputable international

agencies. The South Centre therefore joins in the widespread and indeed the overwhelming call for the lifting of the trade embargo and other sanctions against Cuba. We also believe that this would contribute significantly to the normalization process initiated by both countries.

United Nations Children's Fund

[Original: English]
[2 June 2015]

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has been working with Cuba since 1962. The current country programme covers the period 2014-2018 and is fully aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2018, with the UNICEF strategic plan 2014-2017 and with national priorities.

UNICEF supports the Government's efforts to maintain past achievements and improve service quality in three areas: health and nutrition; education; and the culture of rights, protection and participation. In this context, the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba continues to affect the living conditions, education and development of Cuban children, adolescents and their families. Since the embargo increases the cost of supplies, basic social services such as health care and education are affected. The embargo also disrupts the sustainability of the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Impact on health services

Information provided by the Ministry of Health and confirmed by UNICEF experience highlights that the embargo continues to affect the health sector owing to the need to acquire medicine, reagents, spare parts for equipment used for diagnoses and treatment, medical and surgical instruments, and other supplies from distant markets, often having to go through intermediaries, thereby increasing health sector costs, preventing access to latest-generation inputs and technology and creating stock shortages.

As an example, in the framework of the mother and child care programme, a national programme is implemented in order to diagnose, handle and prevent genetic diseases and congenital defects in children, from their first days of life. The National Centre for Medical Genetics, in charge of the programme, has had difficulty purchasing the equipment and reagents needed for its laboratories to function properly since the equipment and reagents come from firms located in the United States. This hampers the diagnosis of some diseases, such as congenital adrenal hyperplasia and galactosemia. There were also limitations to conduct chromosomal studies of pregnant women over 37 years of age or with pathologies detected by ultrasound owing to the lack of amniomax, a complete medium used for the culture of prenatal human cells. In addition, it was impossible to purchase the software for the spectrofluorometer of the Shimadzu brand since it contains United States software. That instrument is used to conduct the studies needed to diagnose diseases triggered by inborn errors of metabolism.

The William Soler Hospital Paediatric Cardiology Centre was unable to purchase better-quality nutrients such as aminosteryl, which is especially important for the preoperative and postoperative treatment of malnourished paediatric patients

with complex and critical cardiopathies. It is only produced by Abbot Laboratories, of United States origin.

Impact on education services

The impossibility of being able to buy in the United States market and, in many cases, in nearby markets owing to embargo restrictions has a negative impact on the quality of education. Information provided by the Ministry of Education and confirmed by UNICEF experience highlights that the embargo increases the costs of necessary educational supplies such as English books, specialized literature, equipment and materials for physics, chemistry and biology laboratories, as well as computer parts and sports equipment. Those resources have to be purchased in distant markets, which increases freight costs.

According to the Ministry of Education, the cost increases and limited payment facilities, constrain Cuba from being able to purchase appropriate educational materials for 500 childcare centres, as well as supplies for the maintenance of all schools hydraulic systems, and the magnetic boards required for the education of children with hearing impairments.

The situation indicated above underscores the effect of the embargo on the condition of education for children with disabilities since it increases the cost of specialized materials, thereby reducing the quantity of products that can be purchased. For example, the cost of braille typewriters for blind children is tripled because of the need to purchase them in distant markets. The same thing applies to the purchase of cochlear implants for deaf children.

Regarding technical professional education, the embargo hampers the purchase of the raw materials, equipment and tools used for practical training such as workshops for children with disabilities.

With regard to information technology and access to technology, the embargo prevents access to some of the information technology tools required to produce educational multimedia such as Adobe Flash, ToolBook, and Mediator, and to consult bibliographic references such as those provided by Cisco Systems, Google, Symantec, SunMicrosystems, NetBeans, Oracle, ProCite, EndNote, ReferenceManager, and RefViz. The licences required to access these tools have to be paid to United States companies, which is prevented by current regulations.

Impact of the embargo on the operations of the Fund in Cuba

The commercial limitations mentioned above also apply to the supplies that UNICEF needs to import, causing an increase in prices and longer purchasing processes (up to 120 days). For instance, UNICEF needs to import supplies for the creation of Human Milk Banks from Spain or Germany. It is estimated that access to the United States market would also reduce freight-related and logistical expenses. In addition, it should be noted that current restrictions on bank transfers from and to Cuba using United States dollars are estimated by UNICEF to increase transaction costs by up to 3 per cent.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

In the Doha Mandate (TD 500/Add.1) adopted in April 2012 at thirteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNCTAD indicates that

> States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries, and that affect commercial interests. These actions hinder market access, investments and freedom of transit and the well-being of the populations of affected countries. Meaningful trade liberalization will also require addressing non-tariff measures including, inter alia, unilateral measures, where they may act as unnecessary trade barriers.

In December 2014 the President of the United States, Barack Obama, announced historic steps to chart a course of normalization in United States relations with Cuba. Subsequently, several new actions were taken to ease some embargo measures. These actions are discussed below in the section on developments in the United States. Most of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, however, remain in place.

Economic and trade trends in Cuba

The embargo has had significant negative effects on the Cuban economy and on the standard of living of Cuban citizens. The Government of Cuba reported that the economic damage caused by the embargo up to mid-June 2014 amounted to more than $116,888 million (see A/69/98). Most losses were in the form of forgone revenues from exports of goods and services; the expenses involved in relocating trade, especially expenses incurred due to the immobilization of inventory; and monetary and financial losses due to economic agents' exposure to shifting exchange rates; and increased financing costs.

According to the UNCTADStat general profile on Cuba, it is estimated that the Cuban economy grew by 3.0 per cent in 2013, and the estimate for 2014 is 1.3 per cent.[16] The embargo caused serious financial, economic and social implications to various sectors in Cuba. The food sector was one of the most sensitive areas affected by the embargo as a result of higher costs incurred by relocating to other markets for food imports and being penalized by onerous exchange rates due to the ban on using the United States dollar in transactions. The cost implications of the embargo to the public health sector was estimated at $66.5 million in 2013, resulting from the necessity of acquiring medicine and health-care-related goods from distant markets through intermediaries.[12] The embargo also acted as a serious barrier to the granting of concessionary loans to Cuba, the transfer of advanced technology, the mobilization of foreign capital, foreign direct investment, protection of the environment, and the country's full integration into the global economy.[12] In addition, the negative impact of the extraterritorial application of the embargo is

[16] Economist Intelligence Unit, Cuba country report, February 2015.

substantial since United States firms are frequently involved in international mergers and business partnerships.

Cuba exported $5.6 billion worth of merchandise in 2013, down by 5.3 per cent from the previous year. According to the UNCTADStat general profile on Cuba, merchandise trade balance in 2013 was a deficit of $9 billion. For international trade in services, UNCTAD estimates that Cuba exported $12.4 billion in 2013, down by 3 per cent from the previous year Service trade balance in 2013 was a surplus of $10 billion. The sectors that made significant contributions to foreign exchange earnings in Cuba were professional services, especially the export of medical personnel to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, tourism, nickel mining, biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector, and remittances from relatives living abroad, especially from the United States.[17] Damage inflicted by the embargo to Cuba's foreign trade from mid-2013 to mid-2014 was estimated at $3.9 billion (see A 69 98). Dependence on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for oil supplies in exchange for the services of Cuban medical personnel was reduced in 2014. Cuba remained vulnerable, however, to the economic situation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Brazil, China and the Russian Federation emerged as the major economic partners.[12]

According to the latest statistics for 2013 and 2014 of the Caribbean Tourism Organization, in 2014, over 3 million international tourists came to Cuba, up by 5 per cent from the previous year. The largest market for international tourism was Canada, followed by Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Italy and France in 2014. With regard to United States nationals, while the travel restrictions had been eased to some extent, they were prohibited from visiting Cuba for tourist activities during the mentioned year. It was estimated that the Cuban tourism sector lost over $2,000 million, including travel agency transactions and logistical support from mid-2013 to mid-2014 (see A 68 98).

Developments in the United States

On 17 December 2014, the President of the United States, Barack Obama, outlined three major steps to move towards normalization: (a) the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba; (b) a review of Cuba's designation by the Department of State as a State sponsor of international terrorism; and (c) an increase in travel, commerce and the flow of information to and from Cuba. Re-establishment of a United States embassy in Havana is now under way. On 14 April 2015, the President issued a report to Congress for its consideration, in which he rescinded Cuba's designation as a State sponsor of terrorism. For the third aspect, the measures set out below were introduced.

Goods and services, which can be exported from the United States to Cuba have been expanded to include certain building materials for private residential construction, goods for use by private sector Cuban entrepreneurs, agricultural equipment for small farmers, certain consumer communications devices, related software, applications, hardware and services. Licensed United States travellers to Cuba are authorized to import $400 worth of goods from Cuba, of which no more than $100 can consist of tobacco products and alcohol combined. The United States-owned or -controlled entities in third countries can generally provide services to,

[17] Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba: U.S. policy and issues for the 114th Congress", Congressional Research Service (27 February 2015).

and engage in financial transactions with, Cuban individuals in third countries. The accounts at United States banks of Cuban nationals who have relocated outside of Cuba are unblocked. United States nationals are permitted to participate in third-country professional meetings and conferences related to Cuba. Foreign vessels can enter the United States after engaging in certain humanitarian trade with Cuba. United States institutions will be permitted to open correspondent accounts at Cuban financial institutions to facilitate the processing of authorized transactions. The regulatory definition of the statutory term "cash in advance" will be revised to specify that it means "cash before transfer of title," which will provide more efficient financing of authorized trade with Cuba.

General licenses are now available for all authorized travellers for: (a) family visits; (b) official business of the Government of the United States, foreign Governments and certain intergovernmental organizations; (c) journalistic activity; (d) professional research and professional meetings; (e) educational activities; (f) religious activities; (g) public performances, clinics, workshops, athletic and other competitions, and exhibitions; (h) support for the Cuban people; (i) humanitarian projects; (j) activities of private foundations or research or educational institutes; (k) exportation, importation or transmission of information or information materials; and (l) certain export transactions that may be considered for authorization under existing regulations and guidelines.

The easing of licensed travel and increased trade, although in limited areas, is expected to have a significant economic impact. Moreover, Cuba's removal from the list of State sponsors of terrorism should remove a major deterrent to businesses from outside the United States.[18] Since the relaxation of measures, some business developments between the two countries have been reported in the areas of air and marine transports, tourism service, and information and telecommunications services. But the extent of the benefits from the new measures, in particular as it relates to Cuban exports, is uncertain given that the overall embargo sanctions against Cuba remain in place. The removal of most of the remaining measures requires Congressional approval.

Conclusions

The policy change initiated by the President of the United States is a historic step and is expected to bring significant benefits to Cuba and the United States. The majority of the embargo measures, however, are effective causing substantial damage to the Cuban economy and society. The inability to conduct exchange with the United States has profound implications for the country given the eminent position of the United States in the world economy and the geographical proximity of the two countries. Moreover, the extraterritorial application of the United States embargo continues to affect the legitimate interests of entities or persons in third countries and impedes their trade with and investments in Cuba. The embargo also continues to deprive United States citizens of the substantial economic, scientific, and cultural opportunities that would potentially result from having normal relations with Cuba. In short, lifting the embargo measures will bring tremendous benefits not only to Cuba and the United States but also to the world.

[18] Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba: U.S. policy and issues for the 114th Congress", Congressional Research Service (28 April 2015); and Economist Intelligence Unit, Cuba country report, generated on 8 May 2015.

United Nations Development Programme

[Original: English]
[30 May 2015]

Cuba has maintained a high human development index ranking. In terms of the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals, Cuba is a developing country that has achieved many of the Goals, some long before they had been agreed upon in an international forum. The main challenge is to maintain the quality of the social services and sustain the Goals that have already been achieved.

The Cuban development model is changing. The document entitled "Social and economic policy guidelines" was approved during the Communist Party Congress in April 2011. The Cuban Parliament also agreed to support the guidelines and approved the document during its regular session in August 2011. The guidelines are now the basic guidelines for the reform. The guidelines are innovative within the national context and represent a challenge for the country. The driving force behind them is the objective of stimulating foreign investment, accelerating economic growth and competiveness, recognizing that the local level — mainly local governments — has an important role in the forthcoming decentralization framework.

Cuba initiated in late 2013 the process of monetary unification, which represents one of the major challenges for the country. This complex process is ongoing and requires rigorous preparation in order to address possible impacts on the population. In this context, universal social services and social development remain a priority for the Government and will continue to be of concern to the State. The traditional social protection network is thus being adjusted to ensure sustainability and more focus on the most vulnerable groups, such as the elderly.

Guideline No. 112 calls for the promotion of multilateral collaboration, with direct reference to the United Nations system. In this regard, the United Nations system supports national authorities in addressing emerging issues and challenges.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been cooperating with national authorities in the following priority areas: promoting food security; use of renewable energy; supporting national policy and productive sectors to reduce levels of imports; supporting local governments and their development strategies, particularly those related to value chains; introducing and applying measures for adaptation to climate change, especially in food production; contributing to sustainable development by promoting sustainable use of natural resources through knowledge and technology transfer to productive sector policies and a more effective disaster risk reduction strategy; and supporting the national response to HIV/AIDS and non-discrimination based on sexual diversity. Gender and youth are cross-cutting themes.

The UNDP partnership with Cuban authorities is based on a long-standing relationship. UNDP has supported major local and national development strategies and policies for over 40 years. At present, cooperation is carried out within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2018 and the UNDP country programme document (2014-2018). The country programme document was approved by the Executive Board and is fully aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan for 2014-2017.

UNDP supports priority areas of cooperation contributing to the implementation of the social and economic policy guidelines, in areas that are, at times, innovative within the national context and have a high strategic relevance in view of the changes to the Cuban development model. Fostering sustainable human development will continue to be at the heart of the cooperation programme, which promotes South-South cooperation, innovation, and technology and knowledge transfer.

Specific effects of the United States embargo

In December 2014 the Presidents of Cuba and the United States, Raul Castro and Barack Obama announced the decision to initiate conversations, focusing on steps to be taken to officially re-establish diplomatic relations. Some rounds of negotiations have taken place since January 2015 in order to re-establish relations and open embassies in Havana and Washington, D.C.

Some measures have been approved in this new context, like an expansion of licenses for United States citizens to travel to Cuba in 12 approved categories, and lifting the United States designation of Cuba as a State sponsor of terrorism. However, the embargo remains in place and its impact continues to be very similar to that of previous years, particularly in commercial and financial activities.

The embargo affects the external economic relations of Cuba, and its impact can be observed in all spheres of the country's social and economic activities. It affects opportunities for national and local development and creates economic hardship for the population. The embargo has an impact on the population's most vulnerable groups and on human development in general.

According to official estimates, the cumulative direct and indirect losses to the Cuban economy due to the embargo from the early 1960s until June 2014 amount to $116.8 billion.

The embargo has limited Cuba's access to development credits granted by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, which has narrowed the possibility of obtaining resources to provide financial support for Cuba's national and/or local development plans.

In the context of updating the Cuban economic model, the embargo also limits the participation of foreign investors, particularly United States companies, in prioritized economic projects, including the Special Development Zone in Mariel. In this regard, the embargo negatively impacts investment flows, and limits access to regional and global value chains.

The travel of Cuban experts and researchers to the United States in the framework of cooperation agreements has been limited by the process to obtain visas. It has also been difficult to establish partnerships and to collaborate with United States universities and research institutes, and to promote exchanges among experts from the two countries.

The embargo has continued to have a negative impact on external cooperation initiatives, creating many difficulties with regard to the implementation of programmes and projects owing to trade restrictions or prohibitions on purchasing inputs from United States companies and subsidiaries established in the United States or in other countries. It also reduces the number of possible suppliers and limits the competitive process.

In addition, the embargo places restrictions on shipping line companies whose vessels dock in Cuban harbours. Once these companies sail into Cuban ports, they cannot enter into United States ports. This significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, limiting the availability of transportation and delaying the loading of goods. Costs associated with intermediaries and long-distance transportation have also had a negative impact on the ability to access key inputs and on the final cost of imported project goods and equipment. Likewise, products for development projects have to be purchased and imported from more distant places at much higher costs.

Effects on projects

This situation has had a direct impact on all UNDP development projects and emergency activities, both because it increases the transaction costs of procedures to obtain project inputs and because it increases the cost of transporting the imported goods. Finding available shipping companies requires additional time. As a result, projects have been affected by significant delays in the purchase and distribution of project inputs, which has had a negative impact on the timely implementation of project activities and results.

This situation has been particularly worrisome in the case of projects related to food security and local development, given the lengthy process to access and import agricultural inputs such as irrigation systems, machinery and agricultural tools. In general, procurement processes take longer, delaying project activities and their results. As a consequence, financial proposals and new projects have to consider in their designs an extended period of time for procurement processes and they also have to allocate additional financial resources to cover incremental costs that would otherwise be allocated for development activities. These costs are covered by the funds provided by donors. This situation also affects computer technology acquisitions; for example, the United States company Planson did not obtain a licence from the Office of Foreign Assets Control for export to Cuba.

The projects financed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, of which UNDP is the principal recipient, provide medicines, reagents and laboratory equipment, benefitting 18,257 people of all ages living with HIV/AIDS. They are purchased from third countries and from secondary suppliers at prices significantly higher than those of comparable products sold on the international market. Even when UNDP long-term corporate agreements with international suppliers apply for the project in Cuba, the embargo hinders purchases of products that are manufactured or have a component manufactured in the United States. In these cases, the providers have to obtain a licence from the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the United States Department of Treasury to deliver services or products to projects in Cuba, a bureaucratic process that takes much time and effort.

The Global Fund approved the purchase of GeneXpert IV equipment for a Cuban project on 21 May, 2013. This is high-tech equipment that the World Health Organization is promoting for the rapid diagnosis of tuberculosis and multi-resistant tuberculosis. This equipment is especially necessary for people living with HIV/AIDS or people at risk of becoming sick with tuberculosis. Cepheid is the only supplier authorized by the Global Fund. However, the supplier could not sell the equipment until the licence was approved. Notification of the licence was obtained in April 2014, almost a year later, which delayed the benefit to patients in need of

this important equipment. During 2015, reagents to keep the equipment working will be needed; the licence renewal still being processed, delaying their arrival to the laboratory.

Effects of the embargo on country operations of the United Nations Development Programme

The embargo also affects the day-to-day work of the UNDP office in Cuba, placing it at a disadvantage compared with other country offices. There are limitations to the benefits that could be gained from corporate long-term agreements to effectively implement and monitor development and emergency activities. For example, although there is a signed long-term agreement with Toyota Gibraltar, this company cannot supply spare parts of United States origin. This situation raises transaction costs by at least 15 per cent owing to the participation of intermediaries and higher costs for information and communications technology equipment and services and access to software licences. It also has a negative impact on access to Internet services, thus limiting the effective use of corporate platforms and increasing the amount of time required to perform online processes and activities.

The UNDP Cuba office is also affected by not being able to use corporate accounts with United States banks or the United States dollar as a currency of payment. The office has to take additional administrative measures to carry out programme-related financial operations; for example, it has to use third-country banks, which results in higher costs to the office and its projects and a heavier administrative burden. The related increment costs have been covered by UNDP and project funds from other donors, therefore using resources that could otherwise have been used for development activities.

Another way in which UNDP is affected by the embargo is that national staff required to travel to UNDP headquarters in New York have to request their visas well in advance, sometimes not receiving them on time, although the situation has improved. Furthermore, longer, more expensive alternative air routes, through third countries have to be booked because there are no regular direct flights from Havana to the United States of America. The negative impacts of higher costs and difficulties in obtaining a visa on time are also experienced by Cuban authorities and experts who have to travel to United Nations Headquarters and to other venues in the United States for meetings.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

In response to the request for information on relevant developments since 2014 and how the embargo affects the ability of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to work with and for the Cuban people, UNESCO points out that it is not a funding agency, but rather a specialized technical agency within the United Nations system and that it is difficult, therefore, to quantify the damage of the embargo on programmes run by the organization within its fields of competence — education, the sciences, culture and communication and information. However, from the qualitative point of view, the embargo certainly continues to have an impact on UNESCO fields of competence.

The announcement of the start of the negotiations to re-establish diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba has had an impact on the demand for UNESCO actions in different fields, in particular those related to cultural heritage, tourism and intercultural dialogue for a culture of peace. However, since the embargo has not been lifted, the situation to date has remained relatively unchanged since 2014.

In the area of education, the embargo continues to have an impact on the availability of educational resources, linked to trade restrictions that prevent the purchase of such resources at more competitive prices. In the area of the sciences, the embargo continues to limit the ability to purchase up-to-date scientific materials. In the area of culture, the embargo continues to have an impact on the ability to obtain historic preservation materials, supplies for cultural industries and cooperation with American institutions that might otherwise collaborate, including through exchanges. In the area of communications and information, in spite of recent announcements to cooperate in this field, Cuba remains unable to acquire underwater fibre-optic cables from United States firms, software licences and certain equipment. Although there are more possibilities for academic and cultural exchanges, these continue to be limited by visa policies that make travel and study movements difficult.

The embargo also has an impact on the operations of the UNESCO office in Havana, as well as on participation programme activities implemented by the Cuban National Commission for UNESCO, including the receipt of funds and bank transfers to service providers, resulting in additional costs for the organization, including with regard to air tickets and communications. Staff and their families are also affected personally, such as in the context of bank transfers and international communications.

United Nations Environment Programme

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

From the environmental perspective, the embargo imposed by the United States of America, not only affects Cuba but also affects the Caribbean subregion and the United States itself.

Conservation efforts in the Caribbean Island Hotspot[19] are fragmented and incomplete and lack a necessary common strategy since Cuba is excluded from several of the most important projects in the subregion owing to the fact that the projects are being implemented with United States funds. This not only prevents Cuba from benefiting from the projects but also affects the Caribbean subregion since the subregion cannot be approached as a whole.

The embargo also significantly affects the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems shared between Cuba and the United States. For the proper management of the natural resources shared by both countries, including migratory birds and

[19] The Caribbean Hotspot consists mainly of three large groups: the Bahamas, the Lesser Antilles, and the Greater Antilles (Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Cuba, and Hispaniola, which includes the Dominican Republic and Haiti) with Cuba, Jamaica and Hispaniola constituting 90 per cent of the land area.

marine life, common conservation strategies and agreements between the Governments and or agencies and organizations of both countries should be in place, and this is not possible owing to the embargo. Currently, there is an environmental agreement between the United States, Mexico and Canada on migratory birds, but there are no agreements between Cuba and the United States, despite the fact that the number of birds migrating between these two countries is very large, as with the above-mentioned North American countries.

The embargo eliminates the possibility of implementing common strategies for the integrated management of the environment and the natural resources that surround these two countries, and important integrated progress cannot be made in the absence of agreements and dialogue between the two Governments on their shared environments.

Much of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is also carried out through South-South cooperation that involves knowledge transfer, capacity-building and technical support between Cuba and other countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region, including training events, capacity-building activities and workshops.

UNEP has a number of projects being implemented in Cuba, some of which are being affected by the embargo, such as the Caribbean Biological Corridor, which was recently concluded and is under implementation through an agreement reached by Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The impact of the embargo on the project is evident in the context of gathering and processing remotely sensed and spatial data for the Caribbean Biologic Corridor.

The project included the purchase of Global Information System (GIS) software to support project activities, but given the existing trade restrictions faced by Cuba, many suppliers are unable to deliver products to and services in the country. The alternatives in terms of the availability of other capable software are therefore limited. The Government of Cuba uses "Supermap" GIS software with reliable results, and staff are fully trained in its use. Supermap software is provided by China and is not used by the other two countries that participate in the project.

Lack of access to technology and equipment may hamper the harmonization required for the three countries involved since such devices as the ones mentioned above are not made available to Cuba. The continuing embargo translates into missed opportunities for environmental cooperation in the region.

Other examples of the impacts of the embargo are outlined below:

(a) Since United States companies are not allowed to sell equipment, technology, and other products to Cuban companies, Cubans are forced to buy them in other markets, which increases cargo travel time to Cuba and consequently increases the level of carbon emissions associated with transport;

(b) Cuba continues to increase energy efficiency, under its energy revolution programme, as well as promote recycling and other green technologies. The aim is to decrease oil consumption and carbon dioxide emissions and to achieve general resource efficiency. However, United States companies or their subsidiaries in other countries are not allowed to sell such technologies to Cuba, which could benefit from such endeavours. The same is true for other products, produced by non-United States companies, that contain parts or components provided by United States companies or subsidiaries that could assist in advancing such developments;

(c) Cuba is one of the world's leaders in biological research, with thousands of graduates from the country's 10 universities and institutes devoted to working in ecology producing important technologies and products, including biotechnology applications. Cuba also possesses significant knowledge in natural resources conservation. However, these technologies or products are not allowed to be sold in the United States;

(d) The participation of Cuban experts in environmental and sustainable development conferences and training activities is often hampered by travel restrictions, and thousands of dollars are spent for more expensive and often longer travel routes;

(e) The embargo also restricts Cuba's access to information from leading scientific and technical journals and publications, as well as Internet access to specialized companies and institutions in the United States. This limits access by Cuban academics, engineers and students to cutting-edge developments in energy and environmental sciences, which could increase their capacity to implement sound environmental technologies. Connectivity restrictions also limit Cuba's ability to implement and comply with certain environmental treaties that require the constant use of the Internet;

(f) Cuba also has limited bandwidth owing to the embargo. This affects the participation of Cubans in Internet-based conference sites and Webinar platforms, virtual meetings and training sessions, which are increasingly being implemented to decrease travel and other costs;

(g) Both the United States and Cuba have an interest in oil exploration and exploitation in shared marine areas. Joint environmental impact studies and environmentally friendly methods of operation are currently not possible as a result of the embargo. The 2010 oil spill underlined the importance of addressing this issue as a matter of urgency;

(h) Both countries are located in regions with critical biological corridors that could benefit from full regional cooperation;

(i) The United States and Cuba are located in a region where disasters, particularly hurricanes, are seriously affecting ecosystems and populations. Both countries are working to better prevent and prepare for disasters. In this sense, cooperation would benefit both countries, as well as other countries of the wider Caribbean area;

(j) Another consequence of the embargo is the limited access by Cuba to international loans and international financial institutions, affecting Cuba's ability to move towards sustainability. This has led to general claims by Cuba that the embargo hampers its sustainability efforts.

The elimination of the obstacles that limit normal exchange between the two countries would contribute to advancement in the sustainable management of shared ecosystems, cooperation between scientific and academic communities and the increased contribution of both countries to combat climate change, promote ecosystem management, and prevent natural disasters and accidents. It would also benefit other countries where the Cuba and the United States have cooperative programmes.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is pleased to submit once again a note expressing support for the resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, the most recent being resolution 69/5, which was adopted by the General Assembly on 28 October 2014.

UN-Habitat has worked in Cuba since 2001 and opened its office there in 2005. The main purpose of its presence in the country is to support the Government of Cuba in implementing its priorities and development agenda in line with the priorities and mandates of the UN-Habitat with regard to issues of housing and human settlements.

During the past nine years, UN-Habitat has supported the country in the implementation of several projects, whose priority is reflected in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and the activities agreed between the United Nations Development Programme, the UN-Habitat country programme and the Government of Cuba. Projects have included those related to urban planning and management at the national and municipal levels, housing and urban recuperation as a result of hurricanes, and support for changes in the housing and habitat sector.

The implementation of the projects is tied to development, and their execution has been severely limited as a result of the political, economic and commercial blockade on Cuba, which restricts access to international markets that are critical for the provision of supplies, equipment and technologies that would serve to improve the quality of life of the population.

In essence, from the perspective of human settlements, the implementation of General Assembly resolution 69/5 would not only improve the socioeconomic and environmental condition of human settlements but would also improve and promote significant progress related to the new urban agenda, particularly for the poor and disadvantaged sections of the population.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) notes with appreciation the involvement of other relevant agencies of the United Nations system in the preparation of the report to be submitted to the Secretary-General, as well as the stipulations outlined in paragraph 4 of resolution 69/5. In that regard, the information set out below describes relevant developments in Cuba associated with the programmatic activities of UNIDO in the country since June 2014.

The UNIDO project on the theme "Generation and delivery of renewable energy based on modern services in Cuba: the case of Isla de la Juventud", which was officially concluded in 2014, is of particular relevance. The main project results related to the development of new business models, the installation of demonstrative biomass pilot plants and capacity-building for sustainable renewable energy

delivery in Cuba. However, it must be noted that the success of the project's execution was delayed and jeopardized in November 2014, as a result of the refusal of the International Bank (Santander Bank, Uruguay) to accept payments from Cuba for a local supplier (BERKES, Uruguay) because of the sanctions imposed by the United States of America. Fortunately, the case was finally resolved in 2015 after several interventions by all the stakeholders.

Currently, UNIDO is supporting Cuba's efforts in an the context of investments and in promoting a strategic alliance to strengthen the country's industrial capabilities and competitiveness in priority industrial sectors through the formulation of a country programme, as requested by the Government in November 2014, in line with the economic and industrial transformations decided by the Government and with the United Nations Development Framework, signed for 2014-2018. The country programme will focus on three main outcomes:

(a) Improvement of business environment and sustainability;

(b) Improvement of industrial competiveness;

(c) Attraction of foreign investment.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

[Original: English]
[1 June 2015]

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) notes that the Caribbean region continues to be increasingly confronted with a number of challenges related to the trafficking of illicit drugs. Cuba and other Caribbean countries are affected by cocaine production in Latin America. UNODC is strengthening its presence in the Caribbean to support member States in their efforts to counter these challenges and expects to strengthen its cooperation with Cuba in the context of initiatives for the region, including new initiatives to enhance border controls.

Cuba is covered by the UNODC Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean in Panama, which initiated its activities in September 2009. In April 2014, UNODC launched a regional programme for 2014-2016 in support of the crime and security strategy of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Although Cuba is not a member of CARICOM, it benefits from the regional programme, in particular through synergies with the Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of which Cuba is a member. The regional programme comprises five subprogrammes, which reflect the thematic areas covered by the UNODC mandate, and which directly target the strategic goals of the CARICOM crime and security strategy, as follows: (a) countering transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking and terrorism; (b) countering corruption and money laundering; (c) preventing crime and reforming criminal justice; (d) drug use, prevention and treatment and HIV/AIDS; and (e) research, trend analysis and forensics. It has a total budget of $11.7 million.

In the context of the regional programme, UNODC is working towards re-establishing a presence in the Caribbean before the end of 2015, probably in Barbados. The UNODC Caribbean office will also benefit Cuba as part of the

strengthened presence in the region of UNODC, in close coordination with regional and national counterparts.

Cuba has effectively cooperated with UNODC in the areas of its mandates and the contribution has been always positively assessed by both parties. Cuba is a State party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and has participated in an active and efficient manner in its review process. Cuba was selected to review Saint Lucia in the fourth year of the review cycle (2013/14). Cuba nominated its own reviewing experts on 14 November 2014. The review has been delayed as Saint Lucia has yet to provide its self-assessment check list. Cuba has expressed interest in participating in the container control programme of UNODC and the World Customs Organization. In this regard, preparatory work is ongoing, including the planning of an official high-level visit to Cuba, probably in the second half of 2015, to coordinate the relevant details to start the implementation of container control programme in the country, including security of trade and facilitation of monitoring and review of containers at sea ports, and air cargo (to be funded by Canada). During the twenty-fourth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Cuba (in cooperation with the Plurinational State of Bolivia), Ecuador, Nicaragua, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)) organized a side event on the theme "Cybercrime: a risk to the stability of our countries". Ongoing consultations are taking place with the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations Office at Vienna to ensure the participation of Cuba in the UNODC global project to promote long-term and sustainable capacity-building to fight cybercrime.

For UNODC it is essential to continue promoting resource mobilization to include Cuba in the implementation of UNODC activities in the Caribbean.

United Nations Population Fund

[Original: English]
[30 June 2015]

In spite of recent measures undertaken by the Government of the United States of America to ease the embargo against Cuba, the embargo continues to represent an impediment to Cuba's economic and social development and generates adverse effects on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of the human development of Cuba, particularly affecting the most vulnerable socioeconomic groups of its population.

The most serious effect of the embargo is the continuous shortage of all kinds of goods and services, including food and medicines, which have to be purchased in distant markets, often in unfavourable price conditions, sharply increasing insurance and freight costs. In this context, UNFPA continues to operate under difficult environmental circumstances, particularly for the acquisition of commodities, including those for sexual and reproductive health, equipment, medicines and laboratory materials produced by the United States or covered by United States patents. Moreover, UNFPA has been encountering difficulties in making bank transfers to providers since the detailed information required by the vendor website has caused payment delays when bank data from Cuba appears in the transaction.

Within these difficult circumstances, UNFPA has supported the Government of Cuba in accessing the international market on reproductive health security commodities by selecting, with the advice of the UNFPA Procurement Service

Branch, the providers and goods that are not restricted by the embargo. This has allowed the country to strengthen its family planning services with the provision and use of a greater range of modern contraceptive methods and at the same time allowed UNFPA to effectively support the country during humanitarian emergencies. UNFPA is one of the very few funding sources for sexual and reproductive health in Cuba. In general, as a consequence of these limitations, resources, which could have been used to more effectively achieve the expected programme results, are used to cover additional costs derived from the embargo. Although UNFPA is currently developing a resource mobilization strategy for Cuba to enable the country office to deal with financial limitations and expand its work in the country, the embargo limits the flow of international sources of assistance to Cuba. The current situation continues to affect the ability to maintain the achievements in sexual and reproductive health and access to family planning.

Universal Postal Union

[Original: English]
[1 May 2015]

As a specialized agency of the United Nations, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) is not directly involved in implementing General Assembly resolution 69/5, which only affects Member States.

UPU has always regarded Cuba as a fully-fledged member of the organization. As such, Cuba enjoys the same rights and obligations as other UPU members.

Cuba was re-elected as a member of the Postal Operations Council of UPU at the last UPU Congress, held in 2012, and serves on a number of the Council's committees and working groups.

World Bank

[Original: English]
[29 May 2015]

Cuba is currently not a member of the World Bank and, as such, the World Bank has no mandate to engage in any project or research capacity with regard to Cuba. The World Bank therefore is not in a position to contribute to the report.

World Food Programme

[Original: English]
[19 May 2015]

Over the past 50 years, Cuba has established some of the most comprehensive social protection programmes in the world. These programmes have allowed Cuba to largely eradicate hunger and poverty. Cuba has become one of the most successful countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and is ranked 59 on the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index. Maintaining progress in achieving the Goals is a priority for the country. Cuba faced a severe economic crisis in the 1990s. The crisis has had an enduring impact on food security and nutrition. The global financial crisis, frequent natural disasters including the worst

drought in 100 years (2003-2005), high global food prices, limited access to credit, low productivity, and the United States embargo have further exacerbated the food security situation in the country.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has been working in Cuba since 1963 to support the Government in promoting food security and nutrition in the country. The Programme has been cooperating with national authorities in (a) supporting Cuba's national programme against anaemia; (b) supporting food-based social safety net programmes; and (c) supporting national response to natural disasters — the most recent of which was hurricane Sandy, which hit the country in October 2012.

Cuba is undergoing a significant transition of its economic model and social programmes, as defined in the social and economic policy guidelines, which were approved during the Communist Party Congress held in April 2011 and point to future acceleration of the economy while ensuring the sustainability of the existing social protection programmes. In this context, food security-related social protection systems, the decentralization of the decision-making process regarding food resources and the adoption of a new management model for agriculture focused on reducing food imports are critical processes.

In 2014, the WFP country programme for Cuba for the period 2015-2017 was approved by its Executive Board. The new country programme is based on a new strategic approach to Cuba to address the food security priorities as defined by the Government of Cuba as well as by the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the period 2014-2018, which defines food and nutritional security as one of the four pillars of United Nations cooperation in Cuba. The new country programme focuses on capacity-building and augmentation using focused transfers to meet critical food and nutrition needs and to strengthen the overall food-related safety nets in Cuba. The programme will support national and local authorities in shifting to more sustainable and targeted social protection systems. This will be pursued through three linked objectives, which will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Framework:

(a) Support food security and nutrition-related social protection programmes;

(b) Strengthen links between social protection systems and agricultural value chains;

(c) Strengthen community resilience, preparedness, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation capacities at the local level.

Effects of the United States embargo

2014 marked the beginning of a significant shift in United States-Cuba relations. On 17 December 2014, after more than five decades of cold war hostility, the Presidents of Cuba and the United States made a historical announcement concerning a series of measures for normalizing the relationship between the two countries, including steps towards enhanced commercial relations. Foreign vessels will be allowed to enter the United States after engaging in certain humanitarian trade with Cuba. However, and while Cuba will benefit from the lifting of some of the restrictions imposed by the United States on the country, the United States embargo remains in place.

Despite these developments, throughout 2014 the United States embargo continued to have a negative impact on the Cuban economy as well as on the operational conditions of the Programme. The high cost of importing agricultural equipment and inputs is a key factor limiting high agricultural productivity in Cuba. Most Cuban farmers can only access a limited amount of agricultural inputs; new technology and equipment are also hard to come by. As a result, Cuba is unable to produce all the food it requires, and the Government needs to import a significant proportion of food commodities to meet the requirement of its national food-based social safety nets programmes. This represents a significant budgetary burden for the country, threatening those most dependent on social safety nets and imposing significant challenges to food security in Cuba.

Limitations imposed by the embargo restrict the ability of WFP to procure services and products from United States-based companies or companies that process payments through United States subsidiaries, directly affecting projects as well as the ongoing running of the WFP office.

The procurement and shipment of food and non-food commodities are also delayed owing to the above-mentioned logistics challenges. Because of the embargo, vessels are obliged to make a stopover in a neighbouring country for transhipment. This causes delays and additional costs, which also affect WFP shipments.

The ongoing work of WFP in Cuba is also affected by difficulties in purchasing equipment at more competitive prices. This affects the purchase of information technology equipment, given that, at regional level, various companies are unable to supply Cuba because they are subsidiaries of a United States company. This applies also to the purchase of spare car parts and office stationary, increasing regular WFP costs. Moreover, the costs of voice and data communications are abnormally high because of having to avoid United States infrastructure.

Banking transactions are also restricted by the limitations that the embargo imposes on financial institutions dealings with Cuba. This can affect the payment of staff entitlements when, for example, a reference is made to the duty station, as well as personal financial activities. Country office payments, although processed through the United Nations Development Programme, are also vulnerable to such limitations.

World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization

[Original: English]
[8 June 2015]

The present reply was prepared by the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO) country office in Cuba, to address General Assembly resolution 66/6, on the need to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba. The relevant aspects of the impacts on public health as a result of the blockade are highlighted, as well as the WHO/PAHO technical cooperation programme with the country.

It is important to emphasize that on 17 December 2014, Presidents Raúl Castro and Barack Obama announced the intention of opening a new chapter in the relations between the United States and Cuba. The announcement was later

reiterated in the gathering at the Summit of the Americas in Panama, at which both participated. As a result of these new political developments between both countries and the easing of travel restrictions, including with regard to obtaining visas, a significant improvement has ensued regarding the exchange between Cuban and American professionals and health scientists.

Impact on the population, the health sector and individual health

Cuba has made public health a top priority, reflecting this in its Constitution and instituting a national health law. The results of this have become evident over the past few years, wherein Cuba has boasted health indicators comparable to the most developed countries in the world.

The Government of Cuba has invested vast financial, material and human resources at all times, including during the most difficult periods of economic turbulence, in order to guarantee the development and sustainability of health services. The efforts have been jeopardized, however, by the financial, economic and commercial blockade imposed by the United States. Cuba has had to take measure in response to this, such as relocating the commercialization of needed health supplies from remote geographic regions. The consequences of this have had different effects, such as the stark increase in spending and, in many cases, foregoing the use of certain health technologies since commercial agents and companies are prohibited from selling United States-made products to Cuba and are not allowed to support the scientific exchange between Cuban and American professionals. The rise in costs is mainly due to the need for obtaining medicines, reagents, replacement parts for equipment used for medical diagnoses and treatments, tools, and other supplies found in remote markets, making it necessary to sometimes resort to intermediaries, further increasing costs. The environmental cost of transportation from geographically distant regions must also be considered, as well as the cost in terms of the time involved, resulting in serious inefficiencies for the health sector and beyond.

According to studies, the accumulated impact of the embargo, since its inception, amounts to $2.48 billion. In the past year alone, it has amounted to $76 million.

The health sector in Cuba has suffered a negative multiplier effect as a consequence of the blockade in terms of the cost of every day products, the difficulty encountered in obtaining products, the impact on basic social services and the living conditions of the population. Public health is also affected as a result of the limited investment the country is able to make in its infrastructure, including in respect of housing, highways, water and sanitation. Public health is affected even more directly through the inability to access necessary resources in order to confront epidemiological threats.

The embargo on Cuba also hampers the country's development in the area of public health since it is unable to access loans or grants from international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, and has limited access to donations from philanthropic organizations and civil society in the United States. In general, Cuba is able to obtain goods from subsidiary companies that have elevated costs and sometimes they do not obtain the specific products needed, forcing Cuba to buy similar products, which lowers the quality of

care and health in the country. These impacts are complex and it is therefore difficult to measure the exact magnitude and financial costs involved.

In order to register and control all the impacts of the embargo on Cuba, the Cuban Ministry of Public Health holds meetings with all relevant national health institutions, including national hospitals, research institutions and provincial health units, and national working groups of various health professional associations, which document and report the effects experienced. The Ministry has created permanent working commissions through a legal resolution to report on the impact of the embargo. The commissions include the directors of every health institution and establishment in the country, who seek to guarantee the thorough coverage and quality of the information through individual communiques and monitoring reports. All of this is undertaken pursuant to the regulation established through Legal Decree 290 from the Ministerial Council on 29 March 29 and Law 80 of the Reaffirmation of Cuban Dignity and Sovereignty, dated 24 December 1996.

Within the spirit of this legal framework, the implementation of extraterritorial measures and or the imposition of political pressure, as is done by the United States to obstruct or impede Cuba from conducting commercial operations and economic transactions from collaborative projects and financial investments, are considered to be harmful and damaging since they can hinder access to technology or knowledge and thereby affect production, services and other aspects.

Information on the economic impact

(a) Losses due to geographic relocation of trade in order to replace products manufactured exclusively by United States industries

- The geographical remoteness of markets has an impact on changes in the costs of purchases. It is difficult to calculate the costs involved as a result of the "triangulation" of commercialization since prices in the United States market cannot be used when specialized websites on the Internet are blocked.
- There is a need to maintain a surplus inventory so as to guarantee the availability and circulation of merchandise due to the possibility of delays in the arrival of supplies. The method developed for the replacement of parts for medical equipment installed in the national health system in order to mitigate the effects of the foreign blockage provides an example of the negative economic impact of the embargo on the health sector.
- Another issue concerns the operational costs in the transportation and shipping of merchandise acquired in remote markets. The cycle for the supply of merchandise has several phases, each with an average number of days, depending upon the type of shipment to be made to Cuba: air, multimode, sea. All the steps in the process must comply with certain trade requirements, which, in the case of Cuba, considerably prolong the process and increase the costs. If trade were undertaken with markets that were geographically closer, the extended time period and cost would be diminished.
- The total estimated cost of this impact is $14 million.

(b) Impact on production and services

- The impossibility of obtaining parts or the limited ability to import them from distant markets has repercussions primarily in the care and sustainability of medical and dental equipment, as well as the production of goods and services in the health sector. Many technologies come exclusively from the United States, in which the replacement parts are sold by businesses that have a monopoly in the market or have subsidiary companies, which do not allow trade with Cuba. This has a total or partial impact on equipment and the quantity and quality of the health services provided.

- Delays and other issues that affect production and services include the lack or inadequate types of technology and raw materials, which have an impact on, the provision of intensive therapy, and coronary- and angiology-treatments, among other services. The wait time in all types of services is a variable that is essential in measuring the quality of the services and user satisfaction; in terms of health, the time a patient spends in a hospital bed, along with the wait time for consultations owing to delays unrelated to the protocols for medical conduct, produce unexpected and unnecessary increases in budget expenditures. For example, the number of days of hospitalization, or the wait time for surgical procedures, increases when there is a delay resulting from a lack of the proper equipment and supplies needed for conducting the relevant tests.

- It is also important to consider the annual cost accrued by Cuba owing to the need to send patients abroad for the treatment of pathologies that cannot be attended to in the country as a result of the embargo. This is mainly due to the shortage of updated technology and other raw material needed to solve health issues.

- The total estimated cost of this impact is $24 million.

(c) Impact on technology

The United States embargo has also directly affected different medical specialties, blocking the direct purchase of new technologies and accessibility to technical and bibliographic information. It also limits access to events held for scientists, specialists and other health professionals, prohibiting scientific exchanges and other activities in United States territory or visits from United States citizens to Cuba.

(d) Income forgone through exports of goods and services

- There are activities within the health sector that include the export of services to certain institutions. The activities are geared towards people who arrive on the island, including tourists, or those who require specific or new medical treatments. In addition, there are urgent medical services provided to tourists in the country by any of the Cuban institutions dedicated to outpatient or hospital care, as well as specialized clinics. The company Cuban Enterprise for Medical Services, which belongs to the State, offers different types of commercialization in health services. Additionally, it analyses the services that have an impact on the income forgone as a result of the embargo and extraterritorial laws imposed on the Government by the United States of America.

- An estimated calculation of the economic impact amounts to $27 million.

World Intellectual Property Organization

[Original: English]
[15 May 2015]

As a result of the embargo, the following circumstances have been observed in Cuba to be obstacles to the country's advancement in the field of intellectual property and to have a direct impact on its technological, social and economic development:

(a) By restricting the access of Cuban citizens to the United States of America, the embargo limits the possibilities of human resources development on American soil. As a result, specialized Cuban professionals may not fully benefit from higher specialization opportunities in the field of intellectual property, in particular the opportunities available in the United States. These include aspects of intellectual property asset management, issues regarding intellectual property office management, as well as the opportunity to become acquainted with successful experiences in the implementation of technology transfer offices, technology management, and valuation and collateralization of intellectual property.

(b) Visa restrictions also hinder the participation of Cuban intellectual property professionals in regular training programmes, meetings and other events organized by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in the territory of the United States of America.

(c) Restricted telecommunications infrastructure also hinders the widespread dissemination of WIPO online distance courses in Cuba, despite the efforts and commitment of local authorities to foster a nation-wide culture of respect for intellectual property. Videoconference facilities, which facilitate a most efficient, cost-effective means of communication, especially for educational and training purposes, are also unavailable, since most technical equipment and software tools, originating from the United States, may not be acquired.

(d) Poor telecommunication facilities also have a negative impact on and obstruct the access of Cuban nationals to WIPO online databases and other digital services in the field of intellectual property. This situation, in particular the online access to patent information databases, including Patentscope and others, only available through the Internet, is detrimental to the advancement of technological research and other innovation programmes carried out by the Government of Cuba in the field of environmental, medical and life sciences, and bio- and nanotechnologies.

(e) The embargo also affects the availability of information technology equipment and software for the performance of administrative operations regarding filing and granting procedures, in particular patent and trademark search and examination services. Although the country is administratively equipped to perform such functions owing to a capillary presence of provincial branches of the Cuban Industrial Property Office, the lack of specialized software critically hinders such performance. External procurement formalities to obtain the required equipment and software are extremely burdensome. This situation continues to cause cumulative delays in the services that these offices are required to render and prevents the normal growth and expansion of such services. Most importantly, this situation stifles the possibility to take full advantage of the functionalities available under the WIPO Intellectual Property Automated System, since some of the system's

operating tools are not freely accessible for users in Cuba. As such, the possibilities for expansion and customization of the System to meet the needs of Cuban users (both in the capital and in the provinces) are seriously compromised.

(f) The extraterritorial effects of the embargo extend to the financial arena as well. Payments from Cuba to WIPO under the WIPO-administered treaties (Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Madrid System) may only be effected in euros or Swiss francs (but not United States dollars), in order to avoid the restrictions imposed by the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control. Similarly, payments from WIPO to the Cuban intellectual property office must be made in the same currencies. The cost of these indirect transactions for the purpose of avoiding United States banks amount to considerable financial losses and discourage the use by Cuban nationals of the Patent Cooperation Treaty and Madrid systems.

World Meteorological Organization

[Original: English]
[20 April 2015]

Collaboration exists between Cuba and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). WMO has been providing support for projects, meteorological equipment and instruments as well as co-sponsoring meteorological conferences.

As a member of WMO, Cuba benefits from the organization's global and regional services since it receives the organization's publications and other materials. Cuba takes part in WMO activities, such as meetings, workshops and courses.

WMO maintains collaborative relations with all Caribbean Sates, including Cuba, which is a member of Regional Association IV (North America, Central America and the Caribbean) through the WMO regional office for the Americas.

In addition, Cuba participates in projects covering the Caribbean area, such as the related project of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and benefits from them.

World Tourism Organization

[Original: English]
[27 May 2015]

The United States economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba is still evident in general activities, including restrictions on the travel of United States citizens to Cuba, which have a direct effect on the Cuban tourism sector.

Although the agreements reached on 17 December 17 2014 between the Governments of Cuba and the United States are a step towards boosting travel from the United States to Cuba, it is important to emphasize that the regulations of the embargo related to tourist travel have been retained and that they only comprise an expansion of travel under the general license to the 12 categories authorized by law.

During 2014, international tourist travel to the country grew by 4.4 per cent and to the Caribbean subregion by 6.5 per cent. The United States, as the second largest outbound market worldwide, contributes strongly to this ongoing growth

since more than 50 per cent of its tourists have visited the Caribbean in the past five years. This means that during 2014, 22.5 million tourists visited the Caribbean, and expenditure reached the record figure of $27.3 billion. As a consequence, the Caribbean had a better performance than the world's average.

If there were no restrictions on travel to Cuba, it is estimated that 15 per cent of the United States citizens that travelled to the Caribbean would have visited Cuba, according to assessments of the Caribbean Tourism Organization. This would have implied almost 1.5 million United States tourists travelling to Cuba in 2014 and $1.35 billion in receipts for the Cuban tourism sector, on the basis of $900 in average expenditure per stay of a United States tourist to the Caribbean.

The limitations imposed by the United States in its embargo on travel to Cuba, significantly affect the free navigation of yachts and sailboats of United States citizens in the international waters near the Cuban archipelago and prevent the use of marine conveniences, such as docks, nautical facilities and other services, curtailing their earning potential.

Approximately 72.6 million people in the United States are involved in nautical activities and there are 1.7 million boats of different sizes. Many of the boats approach the Cuban coasts when travelling to the Caribbean area, to countries in the Gulf of Mexico, Central America and to other destinations nearby; however, they do not travel to Cuba as a result of the current restrictions.

Cuban marinas currently have about 700 docks that could host, at 75 per cent occupancy, about 191,600 day boats a year, on the basis of an average stay of seven days. This represents 27,400 boats in one year, with an average length of 40 feet and could translate into an income of about $6.2 million. If that amount were added to the costs related to water and electricity services, fuel, supplies, custodial services, yacht repairs and other activities, the unperceived income could be estimated at being not less than $15 million. At present, the number of United States boats received does not reach 150 per year.

Other nautical products that Cuba has the capacity to offer but that do not benefit from United States revenue, owing to the travel restrictions, include deep-sea fishing, fly-fishing, contemplative diving, excursions and trips, and other forms of nautical tourism and beach services, which could generate an estimated $30 million per year.

The embargo measures concerning e-commerce, Internet usage and credit card transactions, as a means of payment for air ticket sales and tourist services, continue to affect tourism operations in Cuba, in particular geographical relocation of the suppliers, which imply higher prices and higher transportation and insurance fees, owing to the long distance that needs to be covered by the supplier markets and the non-mobility of resources to keep large stocks of merchandise. This also implies higher financial costs, because of the need to access the more expensive commercial credit, compared with softer State and bank credit, which is difficult to obtain as a consequence of the pressure exerted by the Government of the United States on third countries and because of currency exchange rate variations since the United States dollar cannot be used as purchasing currency.

In 2014, Cuban tourism companies suffered losses estimated at $1,067,711 in respect of the import of products highly demanded by tourists that had to be obtained through third countries. For instance, several groups of products such as

food, special tourism equipment, technology, electrical materials, general hardware, computer equipment and construction materials, are produced in the United States; however, due to the embargo they had to be bought from third countries.

The impossibility of using payment gateways that operate in United States dollars, such as Webpay, PayPal and PayOnline, which are the most used in the market, requires the development of specific online payment modules for sales abroad, making it more difficult to do business internationally.

Out of the four major global distribution systems in the world, Cuban hotels can only use one, Amadeus, since the other three are United States companies: Sabre, Galileo and Worldspan. This situation prevents Cuban tourist entities from establishing business flows with tourism intermediaries. They cannot advertise their products in internationally renowned United States web portals, such as Google, Yahoo and MSN.

In general, national and international tourism in Cuba for the period from April 2014 to March 2015 has continued to experience severe losses, which could amount to an estimated $1.5 billion, as a result of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the country by the Government of the United States.

World Trade Organization

[Original: English]
[20 April 2015]

The scope and functions of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are defined in the 1994 Marrakesh agreement establishing the World Trade Organization. The preamble of the agreement recognizes that trade and economic endeavours should be conducted with a view to, among others, attaining higher living standards and ensuring full employment, in accordance with the objective of sustainable development and in a manner consistent with members' needs and concerns at different levels of development. The preamble also stresses the desirability of eliminating discriminatory treatment in international trade relations.

Cuba and other WTO members have repeatedly commented on the issue in the context of resolution 69/5 at meetings of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body held between June 2014 and May 2015.[20] Cuba also raised the issue at meetings of the General Council of WTO,[21] as well as during the WTO trade policy review of the United States.[22]

The comments were made in the context of the surveillance of the implementation of Dispute Settlement Body recommendations pertaining to the 2002 dispute brought by the European Union against the United States over section 211 of the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 1998 enacted by the United States.

[20] Since June 2014, this issue has been raised in the following meetings of the Dispute Settlement Body: 18 June 2014 (WT/DSB/M/346); 22 July 2014 (WT/DSB/M/348); 29 August 2014 (WT/DSB/M/349); 26 September 2014 (WT/DSB/M/350); 20 October 2014 (WT/DSB/M/351); 18 November 2014 (WT/DSB/M/352); 17 December 2014 (WT/DSB/M/353); 26 January 2015 (WT/DSB/M/356); 23 February 2015 (WT/DSB/M/357); 25 March 2015 (WT/DSB/M/359); and 22 April 2015 (minutes not available yet).

[21] 24 and 25 July 2014 (WT/GC/M/152); 10 and 11 December 2014 (WT/GC/M/155).

[22] 16 and 18 December 2014 (WT/TPR/M/307 and WT/TPR/M/307/Add.1).

Following the finding of the Appellate Body of WTO, the Dispute Settlement Body recommended that the measure in question be brought into compliance with WTO agreements. Status reports on the implementation of that recommendation are kept on the agenda of Dispute Settlement Body meetings until the recommendation is fully implemented. Cuba, not a party to the dispute, has consistently stated in Dispute Settlement Body meetings that the measure at issue in the dispute affects their trade interests.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that, in July 2014, Cuba explicitly drew the attention of WTO members to the large fine that the United States had imposed BNP Paribas, a French bank being condemned for violating certain United States legislation related to the issue at hand. The matter was addressed in December 2014 in meetings of the General Council and the trade policy review body.